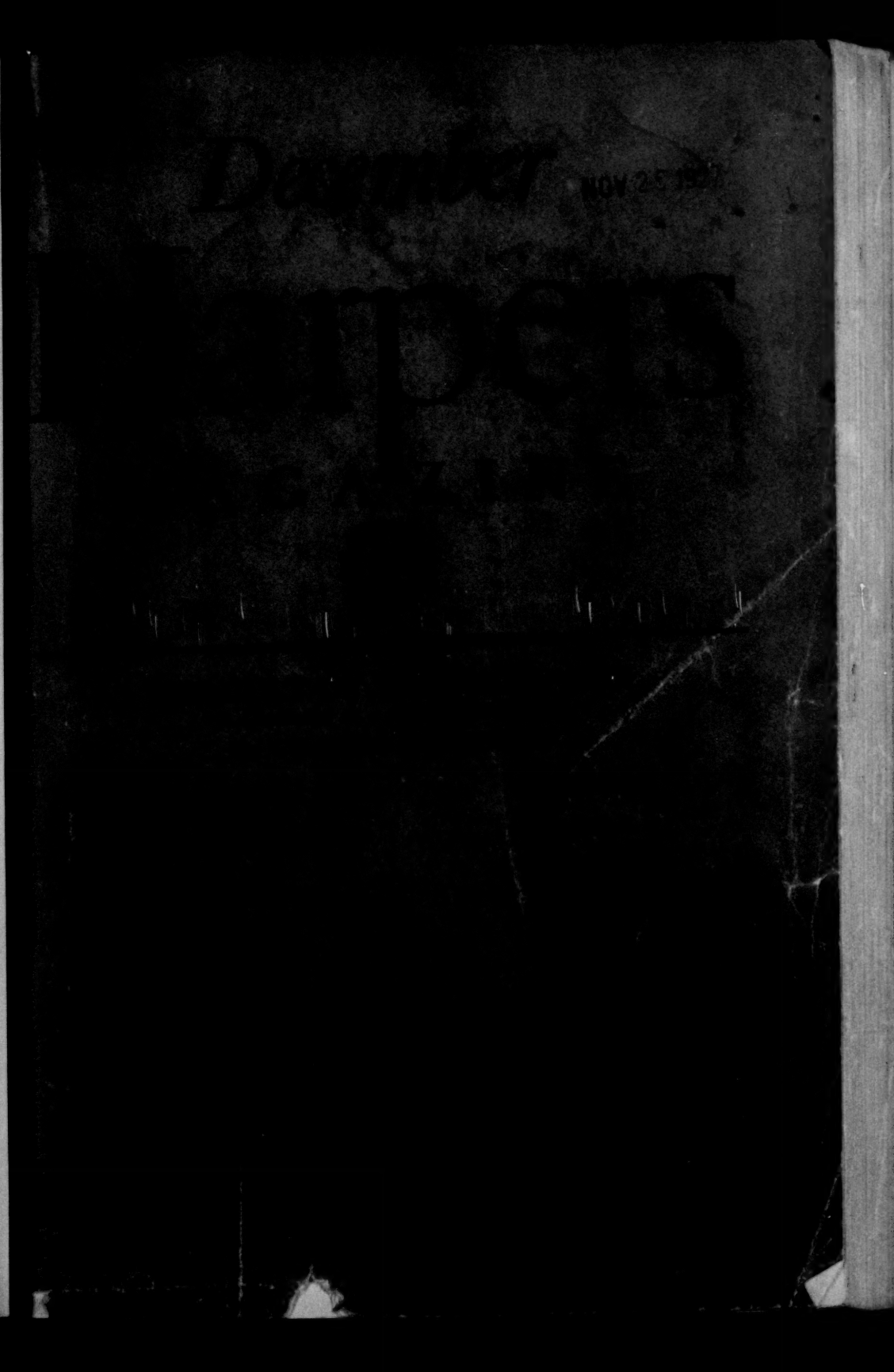

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All of the Johnston favourite boxes are dressed in Special holiday wrappings—gay with the Christmas Spirit

Advice to a Young Man with a Christmas List

THE turmoil of last minute Christmas shopping! The frantic selection of presents—then the doubts—wonder if you selected the right thing for the right person. Not so the wise young man whose unerring judgment and good taste prompt him to send Johnston's. . . . His Christmas shopping is simple. And his is the satisfaction of knowing that each recipient, besides appreciating his gift, is impressed by his thoughtfulness in selecting candy that she prefers.

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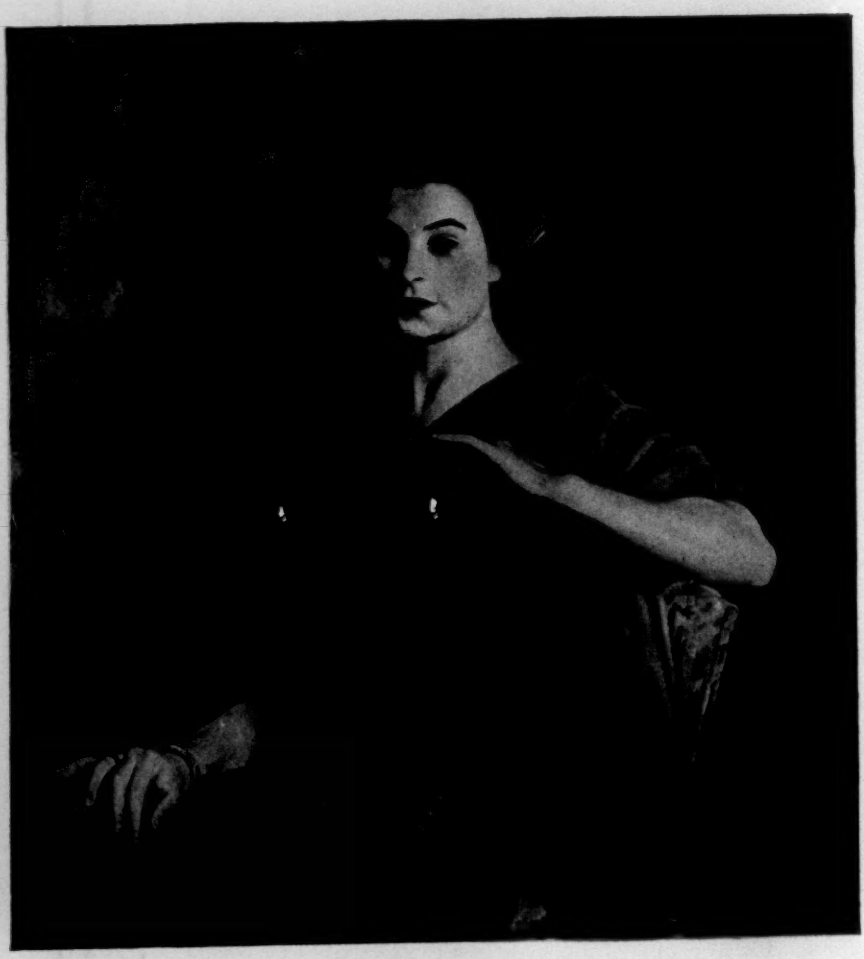
CHOCOLATES

You will find a Special agency for Johnston's Chocolates in one of the better class Stores in your neighbourhood

NEW YORK CHICAGO MILWAUKEE MINNEAPOLIS OAKLAND



THE FRENCH GIRL

By Eugene Speicher

Courtesy of the Rehn Gallery

VOLUME 156 DECEMBER 1927

Harpers Magazine

THE CULT OF THE SEAMY SIDE

BY CHARLES A. BENNETT

IT IS only a few years ago that the phrase "The Younger Generation" was on everybody's lips, as the young persons themselves were on everybody's toes. To sentimental optimists they were The Hope of the Future. To professional alarmists they were a Menace. To the broad-minded liberal they were both. "The modern flapper," said a character in a play of the period, "comes marching down the road with a bomb in one hand and a torch in the other." That was only seven years ago. Where is the Younger Generation to-day? Gone. Vanished. It is not that the Younger Generation has grown up. That were intelligible. No, the very idea has been exploded, so that to talk of the Y. G. as a distinct phenomenon is to prove oneself quite démodé. The Y. G., we are told, has not grown up, for it never existed: it was an illusion, now happily exposed. Thus Miss Macaulay in her novel *Told by an Idiot* tried to make the ghost to vanish by appealing to our sense of historical perspective. There has always been a younger generation, she assured us; and although the younger generations of the past did not worship the twin gods of Jazz and Gin, the deities of their choice were just as shocking to their parents. In spite of parental forebodings the world did not come to an end. And so the moral for perturbed fathers and mothers is, "Don't worry!" Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton was more drastic. He wrote an article in which he declared in effect that, like a true scientist, he had written round to all the sociological museums and collectors, to teachers in high schools and in colleges, only to discover that a genuine specimen of Y. G. had so far not been captured. The youngsters that were caught were all pachydermatous conservatives. The Y. G. belonged with the Unicorn, the Leprechaun, and the Sea Serpent.

For myself I not only regret this attempt to disprove the existence of the Y. G., but I am not convinced by it. For although there may exist no actual company of persons of tender age with tough ideas, there is a set of tough ideas which the now discredited label most conveniently identified. Who the cham-

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pions of this philosophy are, whether they are young or elderly, whether their doctrine is a new thing or a revival—these are questions of no importance. What is really worth our scrutiny is the philosophy itself.

If I were to try to describe its animating spirit in a phrase, I should call it the resolute determination to believe the worst about human nature, the deliberate cult of the seamy side. The prevailing fashion in biography illustrates what I mean. The method now in vogue is to select a Founder of the Republic or an eminent statesman or a pillar of orthodoxy or a great literary figure, to seize upon whatever was weak or petty or unscrupulous in his character and then to offer this as the essence of the man. Another iridescent bubble-reputation has been pricked and shown to be nothing but the soap and water of average human nature. Biography used to be the art of exposition; now it is become the art of exposure. Mr. Lytton Strachey is often held responsible for originating the vogue, but that is an injustice to him. One has only to read again his *Eminent Victorians* or his *Life of Queen Victoria* to see that the impishness and the maliciousness are incidental. His primary interest is not in puncturing the bloated reputations nor in dissolving the sentimental legends of the great but in brooding over the mysteries of human personality. Gladstone, Manning, Gordon, Victoria—follow Mr. Strachey as he tries to penetrate to the moving center of their ambition and you find yourself at last confronted by something enigmatic and inscrutable, a cave of darkness. To come up to the mouth of that cave and, peering in, to speculate upon what lurks in the shadows—that is what fascinates Mr. Strachey. His imitators who are giving us the new biography have captured his manner and missed his philosophy. They give us the weakness and inconsistency of human nature, but none of its depth.

And then there is that magazine that was dedicated to the debunking of American life. It began well. Its exposure of sham and pretension was vigorous and refreshing. But now it has settled down into tedious protest and a fixed preoccupation with the seamy side. Instead of a crusade, we have a cult; in place of an army, a coterie. It set out to attack the messianic complex, and has developed an anti-messianic complex of its own. It has become so stereotyped that anyone can predict the literary weather of the next number: attacks on Rotarians, attacks on clergymen, attacks on college professors, attacks on the great "booboisie." It is become as monotonous in its shrillness as a persistent steam-whistle and as exasperating as an obstinate case of acidosis.

"Your young men shall see visions." Let me offer a composite picture of the vision, in so far as glimpses have been vouchsafed to me.

Gifted, or cursed, with eyes of penetration, the young men I speak of discern beneath the outward forms of civilized life the moving and unlovely realities beneath. Patriotism blows her trumpets, waves her flags, summons men to enlist for the great causes of Country, Hearth and Home, Democracy, the Ending of War, but the enlightened ones know that these are but figures on an imposing façade behind which are concealed the herd instinct in sinister alliance with primitive pugnacity. Statesmanship chatters about manifest national destiny, but we have learned to translate that lingo. It means oil in Mesopotamia or mining concessions in the Urals or the control of the Adriatic. Education is a conspiracy on the part of the elders of the tribe to bring up a generation subservient to those ideals and customs which enable the old men to retain their grip on the reins of power. Morality and convention are convenient adaptations to environment and have no more meaning or authority than convenience anywhere can claim. "The mores," says one authority, with impressive finality, "can make anything right or wrong." The ideal of monog-

amous marriage reflects only a prevailing numerical equality between the sexes, though perhaps it borrows some strength from the play of the property instinct of the dominant male. The system of penal justice with its elaborate and awe-inspiring ritual dissolves under scrutiny into a mere rationalization of the vindictive impulse. A man strikes out at his child in instinctive anger. Afterwards he invents reasons to give an appearance of decency to his explosion: he says he did it for the child's good. All punishment is like that. "The view that criminals are 'wicked' and deserve punishment," says Mr. Bertrand Russell, "is not one which a rational morality can support. The vindictive feeling called 'moral indignation' is merely a form of cruelty."

Art and Religion, needless to say, cannot escape the fatal analysis. Art is the refuge of the frustrated ones, of those who have been unable to "adapt themselves to reality." Your ambition is to succeed in the world. You fail. But you still have longings in you. That sets up a mental conflict. You compose the conflict by entering the world of æsthetic illusion either as creator or spectator. The world of art is the world of day-dreams, and its typical creation is the Castle in Spain. At least you can be king of the castle even though earthly success is denied you. Religion fares no better. The real world is composed of hard facts. Any materialistic scientist will tell you what they are. Soft natures cannot endure the contact, so they have invented religion and its warm, relaxing, and comforting doctrines. "Wish-fulfilment," if you want to be technical, "priests' hokum" in the candid vernacular.

Now of course there is nothing new in principle in the discovery that things—especially the ways and ideals of society—are not what they seem. In every age satirists have exploited the discrepancy between men's professions and their real motives, in order to give point to the charge that man is an incorrigible hypocrite, that civilization is founded on a lie, and that the whole fabric of social institutions and current morality is but an elaborately woven veil of illusion by means of which men conceal from themselves the real facts of human nature. The indictment is familiar, yet it can stand repetition, and probably most of us are ready to grant that it is a good thing for any age to have its critics of the realistic temper of mind.

But the present generation of realists have gone farther than this. They have not only perceived the seamy side of life everywhere: they insist that the seamy side is the real side. It is not only that justice is mixed in with primitive vindictiveness, but vindictiveness, they assert, tells the whole story. It is not only that patriotism has its roots in a natural instinct, but patriotism is nothing else but the call of the herd. Its ideal claims are hypocritical. Now this is the particular form of the prevailing realist or cynical philosophy which I propose to examine. I do not deny that most human institutions and ideals have their seamy side—if you like to beg the question and call it that. I do not deny that one of the tasks of social hygiene is to focus attention upon it. What I do deny is the thesis that the seamy side is the real side.

II

Before undertaking the task of direct examination let me give a specific illustration of this philosophy of life in order that we may have it before our minds in a more vivid form than general statements can produce.

Aldous Huxley somewhere has a sketch called, I believe, "In the Conservatory." A man and a girl are sitting out a dance in a conservatory. They are carrying on what to an ordinary observer would appear to be a conventional and harmless flirtation. But Mr. Huxley is not an ordinary observer. Beneath the smooth lying surface of convention he discerns the secret drama. He has provided both the man and the girl

with a shadowy self, obviously intended to represent the Unconscious or Subconscious in each of them. The double of the man is a primitive being, half man, half ape: the double of the woman is a no less lowly creature. Even the plants and the flowers of the hothouse are not what they seem: as the conversation proceeds they take on the shapes of drowsy-flowered jungle plants and writhing jungle creepers. Behind every word and act and gesture of the so-called civilized pair their primitive counterparts leer or wink or lust in sensual enjoyment. Everything has a double meaning. The implication is unmistakable: the hidden or the unconfessed meaning is the real meaning; the forms of civilized society are sham; in spite of appearances men and women are still the brutish creatures they were at the beginning, and so-called romantic love is nothing but lust. Clever; sinister; diabolical, even. But is it true?

And first let us ask how this philosophy of the seamy side has come to have such a vogue. Its popularity cannot be explained by referring it to accident, to the distemper of youth, or to mere wilfulness.

We can, I think, detect two causes at work. First a violent reaction from the sentimental illusions created and nourished during the War. One of the vilest inventions of the War was the craft of propaganda—the craft of official lying. The detestable thing about it was not so much that it was false as that it was bunk. Nothing was called by its right name. Unpleasant, ugly, or sinister facts were ignored, denied, or drenched in a thick sauce of sentimentalism. Our allies were always gallant, our motives always of the highest, atrocities were confined to the enemy, while our soldiers were always cheerful and inspired by the loftiest of ideals. When America decided to adopt conscription President Wilson announced: "This is not conscription. It is a volunteering en masse." That is a crowning example of the cowardly evasive way of dealing with unpalatable truths which governments everywhere adopted.

But man is not content to live forever in a fool's paradise. The revulsion was bound to come. After the War was the peace, and the peace simply confirmed our suspicions, fanned our smoldering resentment to flame, released our long-suppressed disgust. Almost suffocated by five years of this poisonous atmosphere men clamored with an imperious need for fresh air. The truth at all costs! Give it to us until it hurts! For God's sake! let us get back to the real world even if the real world prove intolerable. "Ye shall know the truth," said this same Mr. Huxley, summing it all up, "and the truth shall make you mad."

Now this was good as far as it went. It is a symptom of mental health, a mark of maturity, to prefer failure or disillusionment in the real world to a fictitious or illusory triumph. But, human nature being what it is, the reaction has of course gone much farther. We are now told not only that the truth hurts and that the truth will drive us mad, but that anything which does not hurt or tend to drive us mad cannot be the truth. And so we have a generation growing up who are convinced that anything that is seamy and sordid or disgusting must, by virtue of those very qualities, be true. Instead of a group of young men with a passion for reality, we have a group of professional exasperators, whose self-appointed mission it is to disconcert and shock us.

III

The second factor responsible for the new philosophy is psychology or, rather, popular versions of recent psychological doctrine. Of late years two interests have dominated psychological inquiry. First, the interest in the abnormal: in hysteria, dissociated personality, loss of memory, automatisms, psychic "traumas" of one kind or another. The most general result of these investigations has been the discovery that the wide-awake, reflective consciousness of every

day forms a small and rather ineffective part of the total psychic life of the individual. The concept of the subconscious or the unconscious has been elaborated in various forms, and a multitude of images or metaphors has been invoked to suggest that the subconscious constitutes the major part of the mind. The subconscious is a reservoir or a storehouse upon which the conscious draws, or it is like an iceberg—the greater part of it submerged; it is the soil underground in which the elements of mental life germinate and grow, or it is a large waiting-room or ante-chamber. The conscious mind, by contrast, is the relatively insignificant part above ground or above water, or it is the small room into which some of the waiting candidates are passed from the ante-chamber by the censor. The contrast between the subconscious and the conscious carries with it the suggestion that the real work of the mind is initiated and transacted in the former. If you are to discover the real grounds for most human preferences and the real, because original, motives for most human conduct, you must look in the subconscious, in that region where buried memories, suppressed desires, primitive instincts, ancestral wisdom, and racial impulses keep unholy company. Here, in this region, of which the conscious mind is hardly at all aware and which, therefore, it cannot control, the primal and authentic springs of action are to be found.

The other interest has been directed towards making psychology scientific. Twenty or twenty-five years ago if you looked into a text book of psychology you found chapters on such topics as Sensation, Images, Pleasure and Pain, Emotion, Ideas, Memory, the Self, Reason, Purpose. Glance at any manual of Behaviorism to-day, and you will discover that all these are discredited concepts. The explanation of the change is simple. None of these concepts refers to things that can be observed by more than one person. My feelings, thoughts, purposes lie open to my own inspection, but no outsider can enter into my mental life and share my experiences. These are private. If they are private then statements about them, whether true or not, cannot be tested by other persons. But where verification is impossible science is out of the question. If psychology, then, is to be a science it must dispense with the private consciousness and all it involves. Therefore, what it proposes now to study is not the experience of the conscious self, but the behavior of the organism. It does not use the ideas of desire, purpose, or reason in explaining human action: it prefers to treat the human being as a machine, or as an organism with a definite structure and with definite tendencies to action, and to interpret conduct wholly in terms of "stimulus and response."

The natural inference from all this is that conscious desire, purpose, and deliberation have much less to do with determining human action than we are accustomed to think they have. We are really automata, and consciousness—if it exists—is an inexplicable luxury.

It is not hard to see how these two streams of psychological doctrine meet to reinforce an identical conclusion. Things are not what they seem, at least human conduct is not what it seems. Each of us has a dual nature: a consciousness *plus* a subconscious or a consciousness *plus* a machine. And it is the non-conscious part of us, whether we call it machine or subconsciousness, that is the hidden controller of our lives. It is the non-conscious part of us that, almost entirely without our knowledge, determines our preferences, regulates our decisions, and causes our actions. Reason has but a small part to play: its main function is to enable us to justify to ourselves or others courses of action whose real origin is instinctive. In essence it is apologetic, coming upon the scene only after we have committed ourselves, in order to preserve our self-respect, our cherished beliefs, or our regard for the conventions of society.

Here are two quotations from recent books of popular psychology that illustrate this theory of human nature.

The New Psychology, then, looks upon the human mind as a highly evolved organism. . . . Its most fundamental activities are non-rational and largely unconscious activities. The power of conscious reasoning is a later development, playing but a minor part, even in the most highly developed human being, on the surface, so to speak, of the firmly built edifice of instincts, emotions, and desires, which form the main structure of the mental organism. In many cases the apparent importance of rational activity is seen to be illusory, forming as it were a mere cloak for the action of deep-seated instincts and desires. (Tansley—*The New Psychology.*)

It is a well-known fact that preachers are always preaching against the sins to which they are, unconsciously, most prone (and rigidly avoid those to which they are consciously addicted). Therefore, it is literally true that in judging others we trumpet abroad our secret faults. . . . We hate in others the very faults to which we are secretly addicted. . . . We condemn the bigotry, meanness, or cynicism in others because we are potential bigots, misers, and cynics. We cannot bear conceited people because we are conceited without knowing it. . . . On the other hand, an easy-going tolerant spirit is often merely the projection of our tolerant attitude towards our own hidden sins. We forgive in others what we desire to forgive in ourselves, for by so doing we temper the sting of self-condemnation. . . .

The same principle applies to our love as to our hate. We love those who represent the things we have not. So the man who is not, but likes to think of himself as, a savant, an aristocrat, or a business man, seeks to mingle in learned, aristocratic, or business circles. If he has the soul of a child and is timid of the world, he is constantly raising his voice in praise of courage, or seeking the company of courageous men. . . . Books on sex are usually written by those whose sex life is in some way or another abnormal. Advocates of universal peace are frequently those in whose souls harmony and peace are completely abolished by inner conflicts of soul. (Hadfield—*Psychology and Morals.*)

IV

Now I do not offer this crude account as an accurate report of what psychology teaches to-day. I have simply been trying to set down the general impression which the layman forms of that teaching. And one can see how, from this point of view, psychology seems to give scientific sanction to the cynic's analysis of human nature. At every point the psychologist drives home the contrast between the professed motives of human conduct and the latent motive, between the overt and the concealed springs of action. Moreover, since he looks at the situation through the eyes of the biologist or physiologist, he supports the cynic in the view that the concealed motive is the real one. If in any given case the question is whether anger or fear or sex or hunger be the real motive as against the professed and probably more respectable motive, the psychologist must reply that the chances are ten to one in favor of the instinct because the strength of the instinct is known to be so great. And so our cynic feels confirmed in his cynicism: all human conduct has its seamy side, and the seamy side is the real side.

In turning now to an examination of this doctrine about human nature let us renounce all ideas of refutation. It is only the undergraduate, hurtling dizzily through a four months' course in the History of Philosophy, who believes that a position seriously held by large numbers of people can be "refuted." One is lucky if one can point out omissions or extravagant emphasis. And so I propose to direct attention upon just one part of the cynical philosophy: I want merely to single out the underlying assumption and show the logical error in it.

Consider that statement: "All human conduct has its seamy side and the seamy side is the real side." The first part we need not deny. It is obvious that men are more creatures of instinct and less creatures of reason than is flattering to their vanity, that they are often deceived,

sometimes wilfully, sometimes through no fault of their own, about the real motives of their conduct. But how about the second part? Is that not pure assumption? If you find that the motives of the patriot or the reformer or the ecclesiastic are often mixed, that reason is often blended with non-rational springs of action, that ideal professions have the backing of instinct, why infer that we are dealing with "rationalization" or "thobbing" or whatever may be the jargon of the moment to describe delusion or hypocrisy? No reason at all, so far as I can see, except the tacit assumption that when you discover the inside you discover the real side: and that the rest is façade or masquerade. This kind of cynicism seems to me to be merely an inverted form of that sentimental optimism which is forever peering round the edges of clouds and announcing silver linings. One is as unconvincing as the other. Imagine an optimist and a cynic on either side of a cloud, one crying, "My side is silver," and the other, "My side is lead," and then ask yourself what either has proved about the nature or value of the cloud as a whole. Yet my sophisticated juniors and my disillusioned coevals really seem to me to offer no better proof than this for their mean estimate of human nature. They smell out an animal instinct or a subconscious wish with which some ideal pretension chimes in too nicely and they cry, "There you are, you see!" To which the only adequate reply is, "Where precisely are we?"

At this point I suppose the logician would say, "A clear case of *non sequitur*," and let it go at that. But perhaps we need to be more explicit. Our question, we may repeat, is this: Suppose you discover a seamy side, have you proved that the seamy side is the real side?

There are two lines of support for the negative. The first may be introduced by an illustration. Consider the contrast between the face that one presents to society and the face one wears in solitude or before one's family. Friends invite me to their house to dinner. As the time approaches I find myself tired, cross, disinclined for society. It is cold and raining outside. I can't find my studs. I know I am going to be bored. In exasperation I exclaim, "I wish people would not ask me out. All I want is to be left in peace." (As though I had stated a modest demand. I forget that in truth it is the ultimate goal of human aspiration that I have defined.) Yet when I arrive at the house I try to appear courteous and affable. The same is probably true in varying degrees of the rest of the company. What should be the inference? That I am a hypocrite and the conventions of society a sham? That is going too fast. For think of what happens as the evening wears on. After an hour or two, especially if wine has been served, we discover that the sociable mood has really developed, that we are enjoying ourselves in civilized fashion. Our original assumptions have become actualities. We are in reality what at first we only professed to be. There, in a word, you have the justification for good manners, and incidentally for wine. The sociable mood cannot be born in a moment. We cannot at a stroke shake off our preoccupations, our dullness, our animal inertia. Some artifice is necessary. We have to act a part before it can become reality. The realist in his zeal for frankness condemns the business of keeping up appearances because he takes it for granted that the appearances are designed to conceal something discreditable. But they may just as well stand for that which we want to live up to. If we adopt an attitude of reverence in church that we do not really feel, or if we expose ourselves to the shafts of the Comic Spirit by insisting on decorum and official observance in various parts of life, may not these be symptoms of good will rather than of duplicity? Ideal claims need not argue hypocrisy if they are interpreted not as records of achievement but as goals to be attained. The country we know is rarely the country celebrated in the na-

tional anthem, but if the anthem be a good one it may enshrine a respectable national aspiration. Punishment may often be a cloak for vindictiveness, but it may also be an expression of the will of the morally indignant self of the community. No man is good enough to punish another. True. But when the state punishes it does not adopt an attitude of "holier than thou"; it says, in effect, "There are certain standards we wish to maintain and this is our way of reminding you of them." It does not state a pretension but a requirement or an aspiration.

And so, to return to the original illustration, in going out to dinner I put my best foot foremost, but that does not prove that my best foot is an artificial foot, not unless you assume that the man in his unguarded moments is the real man. But this is just the point at issue. If you grant that the natural man hates restriction and inconvenience and effort and loves ease and doing what he feels like doing, then he is most *natural* when he is off his guard. But what right have we to assume that the natural man is the real man? Merely to show that he often behaves in a way to which he is not naturally inclined proves nothing to the point unless you once more assume that the natural expression of him is the genuine one. And this is just what I should deny. I contend that our best foot is really our best foot, that the Old Adam is not the true man. The true self is rather the rational self of our ideal. When we adopt the conventions of good manners we are trying to behave as we believe a civilized human being ought to behave. What we aim at, that to some extent we are. The man is where his treasure is.

V

Our contemporary cynicism, I have said, amounts to the assertion that man, after all, is an animal who differs from other animals only in his powers of elaborately pretending that he is more than animal. In this form it was brought home to me sharply a few years ago when I was asked to give a talk on some ethical subject to a group of young people in town. Their ages ran from seventeen to twenty-two. I had no time to prepare a discourse, so I looked over a few old lecture notes and talked to them about White Lies, trying to put some serious ethical meaning into time-honored questions of casuistry, and using some striking "cases" submitted to me at various times by my students. When question-time arrived I was dismayed to find that my audience was not at all interested in the sort of lies I had been discussing. Practically all these youngsters were concerned to know my position on the view that "Society is a lie." By this they meant that all we call culture and civilization—good manners, moral codes, justice, organized religion, government, and so on, was "the bunk." The truth behind it all was the unchanging animal greed, selfishness, rapacity, and lust of man.

This suggests the second line of criticism mentioned above. The cynic ignores an important difference between man and the animal. We may express it by saying that human beings, as contrasted with animals, are so made that you cannot satisfy one instinct in isolation from the rest. By this I mean that before you can get a typical *human* satisfaction of one impulse you must at least have considered the claims of the rest. There is no such thing as a partial human satisfaction: to satisfy a part of human nature you must in some sense satisfy the whole of human nature. An illustration may help to make this clear.

Take the instinct of hunger. In what does the satisfaction of hunger, considered by itself, consist? What is its minimum physiological meaning, so to speak? Let us say a transition from feelings of exhaustion, depletion, fatigue, to those of rest, recuperation, and fullness. We may suppose that, in general, for an animal, to satisfy hunger means no more than this. But a human being

cannot satisfy his hunger on these lowly terms. The demands of the mind as well as of the body have to be met. Thus, while you may experience the pleasures of taste, you cannot really enjoy your food if as you eat you are aware of the hungry poor in your own city or of starving millions in India or China, and have not come to terms with that situation. Again, man has established the institution of the meal and seems thereby to have recorded his discovery that it is more civilized to eat with your fellows than to eat alone, as though he knew that the social impulses must also be satisfied if hunger is to be satisfied. When I was a child in Ireland we once got into the house as scullery maid a half-wild peasant girl from the back hills. She would never take her meals with the other servants. (Those were the days when people could afford more than one.) She would retire with her plate to a pantry or to some dark passage and there devour her food in solitude. Even then I felt there was something animal or subhuman in her performance. I think so still.

Again, you cannot really enjoy a meal if you have not reconciled yourself to the whole system of slaughtering animals for food. In so far as you have never faced that situation or justified it to yourself there is an insecurity and an undertone of discomfort in your enjoyment. You cannot eat whole-heartedly. And the open mind is at least as important as the open mouth.

Once more: there are some persons who cannot really enjoy a meal if they have not said grace. What does saying grace stand for? I hesitate to reply, because a friend to whom I showed this article said, "On one point I will do battle with you to the death: your imputing a religious motive to the saying of grace. By actual statistics, collected by the U. S. Bureau of Standards, out of 1,000,000,000 graces said at table 999,999,999 of them were a mere gesture of the lips. I can't believe that you don't think as I do about this." For the sake of argument I will agree about the statistical returns. But yet every formal observance must once have had a legitimate meaning and may still have one. What, then, may the saying of grace, seriously intended, stand for? Out of deference to my critic I will put it modestly. "I am eating now and I am perfectly willing to have God know." Since God is a being who looketh on the heart, to admit God to one's eating is another way of saying: "I am not ashamed to open my whole life to this act. I have no mental reservations about it." Some people are reluctant to acknowledge their dependence upon the material world. Like Plotinus, they are ashamed of having a body, or, like Bernard Shaw, they look forward to a time when human beings shall have sloughed off the body and become "vortices of thought." They would like to be pure spirit. They are so exquisitely refined that eating seems to them a necessary but unfortunate concession to human weakness. This is the apotheosis of genteelness. But if you feel like this you can't enjoy your food.

The example of eating thus illustrates the principle that no claim of human nature can receive its proper and full satisfaction until other claims, social, moral, and religious, have been considered.

We may express the same contention in another way. Man cannot be satisfied with mere success. He is concerned with the terms upon which success comes to him. And very often the terms seem more important than the success. It has been said that it is better to lose like a gentleman than to win like a cad, and I suppose we should all admit that although happiness, health, knowledge, life itself are good things, it is yet conceivable that we might be offered any one of them on conditions that would be simply intolerable. Indeed, human evolution seems to have consisted largely in a transference of importance from the ends to be attained to the conditions on which they are attained. Man, who began by thinking in order to eat, now eats in

order to think. Consciousness, the biologists tell us, is a symptom of maladjustment to environment. An animal whose every want was satisfied as fast as it arose would never have developed thought. On the merely animal level thinking exists to gratify impulse: it has no other function. It is utilitarian, like teeth or claws. But man is in this peculiar position: before gratifying an impulse he has to stop and think. He has to discover what is involved in the proposed gratification. He has to ask, "Can I approve of myself, can I be at peace with myself if I do this?" The conditions on which he will accept success have become more important than the success itself. And this is merely another way of saying that the human being will refuse to satisfy the claims of one side of his nature if that involves doing violence to the legitimate claims of the rest of his nature.

If this account be true it has two consequences of special interest for our present inquiry.

First, human evolution, or, if you prefer it, advance in civilization, does not consist in growing away from primitive instinct: it consists in seeing more meaning in instinct, in making it sustain a continually enlarging range of significance. The difference, for example, between man and the animals in respect of the instinct of hunger is not that the animal experiences sensations of physiological relief while man doesn't. There is an elementary physiological satisfaction common to both the man's and the animal's enjoyment of food. No, the real difference is that man is able to see more meaning in the act of eating than the animal presumably can.

Secondly, the fact that many instincts, or motives if you like, should participate in the fulfilment of any one, indicates nothing abnormal, still less anything reprehensible in the way of duplicity. It is, on the contrary, the sign of an integral and, therefore, humane satisfaction. In dealing with human conduct and human institutions we should expect to find on the one hand a nucleus of instinct and on the other a range of meaning, social, moral, æsthetic, religious, imported into it. We should expect to find what the cynic calls the professed and the latent motives not at war but in harmonious alliance one with another.

Thus the cynic can gain no support for his theory of human nature by pointing out that both sets of motives are present, nor has he any right to assume that only one set of motives—the seamy set—can be the real set. And so if he points out to me that patriotism, for example, has its roots in the herd instinct and then goes on to declare that this disposes of the patriot's fine sentiments and professions, I can only reply that he has proved not his case but mine. I would not give a hang for a patriotism that was not based upon instinct, but neither would I give a hang for a patriot who did not see more in his patriotism than an instinctive response, who did not at the same time that he served his country find a satisfaction for his desire for adventure, his sense of comradeship, his conscience, and perhaps even for his religious aspirations.

And so with the satisfaction of any other instinct. It can take a form at once profoundly natural and profoundly human. After all we are dealing with human nature: why should we not expect to find there both nature and humanity?

I conclude, therefore, that if our contemporary realists and cynics wish to support their theories they must turn to some other evidence besides that of the contrast between the professed and the latent motives in human conduct. For both of their assumptions are false. It is not true that the latent excludes the professed motive, that nature is incompatible with humanity, and it is not true, apart from further evidence, that the latent or natural or instinctive motive is necessarily the real one. The seamy side, if one must call it that, does not exclude the ideal side, nor is it necessarily the real side. For the distinguishing mark of humanity is that it knows how to transmute the seamy side into the ideal.

AIMEE SEMPLE McPHERSON

PRIMA DONNA OF REVIVALISM

BY SARAH COMSTOCK

THERE is a blare of trumpets, and the murmur of more than five thousand people hushes sharply. A baton flickers—"The Stars and Stripes" flings itself in long red and white streamers of sound. Glances swing abruptly toward a staircase which comes down to the flower-decked platform. A figure descends—plump, tripping, balancing an armload of roses.

"There she is! That's her!"

"That's *her!*"

The plump one trips forward to center stage, lifts the bouquet, her face wreathed in a garland of interwoven roses and smiles. Upon it plays the calcium—violet light, pink light, blue light, golden light. And now the vast gathering rises to its feet, breaks into clapping. The plump one bows to this side, to that, a focussed center of roses, smiles, light, delight, applause, while the band fairly bursts its brass to hail her.

No. It is not a famous prima donna's opening night. It is not the entrance of a world-renowned tragedienne or of a queen of the flying trapeze or the tightrope. It is she who outstrips all of these. It is "Sister."

This was my first sight of Aimee Semple McPherson. From it I received the impression, strengthened on many following occasions, that in this unique house of worship called Angelus Temple in the city of Los Angeles the Almighty occupies a secondary position. He plays an important part in the drama, to be sure; but center stage is taken and held by Mrs. McPherson. It is in her praise that the band blares, that flowers are piled high, that applause splits the air. It is to see her and hear her that throngs travel, crushed in the aisles of electric cars, thrust, elbow, and bruise one another as they shove at the doors of her Temple. Ropes protect the several entrances; hundreds strain and struggle to be first when these are released. A whistle sounds, the ropes give way, a large detachment of the crowd surges through, as many as the ushers can handle. Then up go the ropes again, and a fresh front presses forward, ready to surge in at the next signal. Over the great lower floor and two balconies attendants are hurrying to seat the mob, a full hour before the entrance of the star. Men and women stand against the wall, they sit upon the steps of the aisles, and still, when the final whistle blows, there are thousands turned away, thousands who stand for two, three, four hours on the street and in the nearby park, to listen to the concert and the inspired utterances as they scream themselves forth from the loud speaker outside the building. All the people are making a joyful noise, in very truth; bringing hither the timbrel and blowing up the trumpet in the new moon; but the primary object of this mighty demonstration is not that of the Psalmist's.

Rather, it is an ample lady of early middle years, her soft curves concealing muscles like steel; a lady of flashing eye

and quick movements and conspicuous reddish hair and ever-busy smile; a lady who, gazing forth with satisfaction upon the assemblage come to do her homage, has the right to honest pride. Sunday after Sunday the same phenomenon is seen. Thousands travel to Angelus Temple, packing the street cars and mobbing the doors, standing with aching feet in the hope of gaining admittance. And this happens not for a brief period of hysteria, it is no nine-days' wonder; for several years it has been going on, with ever-growing enthusiasm, and bids fair to continue. Aimee Semple McPherson is staging, month after month and even year after year, the most perennially successful show in the United States.

In the weeks that I spent in Los Angeles and observed her with growing wonder, I probably fell far short of learning all her accomplishments. But this much I did grasp: that as a show-producer with unflagging power to draw she knows no equal. She is playwright, producer, director, and star performer in one; she keeps all her assistants, from call-boy and property man up to her leads, on their toes; and, in their midst, she plays her own role with an abandon that sweeps her hearers by hundreds to the altar. Many a revivalist of the past has played upon his audience by the old methods of sensational preaching; but Mrs. McPherson has methods of her own. Her Sunday evening service is a complete vaudeville program, entirely new each week, brimful of surprises for the eager who are willing to battle in the throng for entrance. In this show-devouring city no entertainment compares in popularity with that of Angelus Temple; the audience, whether devout or otherwise, concede it the best for the money (or for no money) in town.

Take a typical Sunday evening. The spectators arrive to find the stage set with an ocean background, rolling green waves flanked by rocks. At one side rises a lofty lighthouse of the kind known technically as "practical." From time to time its windows flash, its door stands ready to open.

An hour of orchestral music, then the singers file in, from fifty to a hundred of them, ranging themselves in a loft over the speaker's platform, facing the people and creating the illusion of a heavenly choir just above the inspired one's head. Their costumes, for this particular evening of nautical entertainment, are in sailor effect, navy and white, jaunty caps atilt. When at length the leading lady enters in the role of rear admiral, she is gallant in a swinging cape over a white uniform, her red-gold coils surmounted by an all-but-official cap.

And now, after the round of applause, after the usual greetings and opening hymns and congratulations, after the request that everyone shake hands with four neighbors and say, "The Lord bless you!" the program begins. It is announced that Christopher Columbus will recite Joaquin Miller's poem. The lighthouse door opens and America's discoverer, in full costume of the fifteenth century and with impressive whiskers, emerges.

"Look at that, will yuh! If that ain't Chris to the life!"

"*I'll* say it's him!"

Delighted murmurs accompany him as he rolls forth "Sail on!" in baritone billows of elocution, while the organ assists.

The next performer will be a musician who plays upon a tin whistle and a set of chimes, perhaps a few other instruments. Again the lighthouse door opens, forth he comes, a Gloucester fisherman in full rubber attire to protect him from the nor'easter of tribulation. While Mrs. McPherson informs Radio Land upon the microphone (which is her constant care) that, "He's got just a little tin whistle, folks, just like a little child'd play on," the artist chirps forth "Listen to the Mocking Bird," and in the audience many a horny-handed son of the Iowa farm nudges his neighbor and observes

delightedly, "By gum! I used to whistle that when I was *so* high!"

"The Mocking Bird" is followed by "The Old Oaken Bucket," and delight waxes. But the act must be quickly finished. Rarely is the request for an encore acknowledged by more than a bow. The director knows the value of rapid movement, of the quick shift that anticipates boredom. The Gloucester fisherman is hustled off to make way for a sailor boys' quartette in which there is much business of tugging at the ropes, climbing the mast hand-over-hand, heave-hoing, rocking, and rolling. . . . Next an organ solo, a descriptive piece in which a storm at sea is depicted by creaks, roars, crashes, and groans of the instrument and terrific flashes of electric lightning. There are more songs by sailors and sailoresses, and at length, when the appetite for vaudeville is fairly appeased, comes the headliner, the great act of the evening—Sister's message.

It is in what she terms "illustrations" that she gives full vent to her showman's genius. These are her master effort, a novel and highly original use that she makes of properties, lights, stage noises, and mechanical devices to point her message. Heaven and Hell, sinner and saint, Satan, the fleshpots of Egypt, angels of Paradise and temptations of a bejazzed World are made visual by actors, costumes, and theatrical tricks of any and every sort that may occur to her ingenious mind—a mind which must work twenty-four hours to the day to pave the way for the lady's activities.

On this particular evening her analogy pertains to the sea.

"Look at the little pleasure boat!" She turns to the background of tossing waves. "Here it comes, sailing along, having a grand time!"

Forth sails the little boat, which represents the gay and reckless one who ignores the warning to repent. It crosses the background of painted waves somewhat jerkily, but entirely to the satisfaction of the rapturous spectators.

"Yes, it's having a grand time, all right. But here comes the pirate ship—oh, the old pirate'll get you, little pleasure boat! I'm sorry for you, but it's too late!"

And now the pirate ship, emblem of Satan, hurries forward, overtakes the gay craft. A struggle—then down goes the victim, crashing, capsizing, while a rejoicing mob applauds—not the triumph of Evil, but the triumph of Sister the Showman.

A ship of commerce follows and goes upon the pasteboard rocks. "You men that don't think about anything but money, money, can't you make some more money! Oh, you'll find yourself on the rocks!" . . . Finally the submarine; it is compared to those infamous ones who attack Angelus Temple and its high priestess. Her devoted adherents laugh victoriously as the submarine fails in its deadliest efforts at destruction.

The sensation of the season was the spectacle called "Life, Death, and Eternity," which one member of the church described to me as "the grandest show I ever seen. Onct when I was in New York I went to the Hippodrome, but it wan't nothin' to this." A huge world, presumably pasteboard, occupied the center of the stage. The actors in the drama appeared ranged, at one side as angels in heavenly white, on the other, as sinners in purgatorial black.

"Oh, the rich man wants to hold on to his wealth and his fine house—he holds on mighty tight, don't he?"

Now, at this stage of the performance I had not been able to get near enough to see exactly what happened, and I was obliged to visualize the tragedy of Dives through the report of a breathless spectator.

"Say, the rich man was carryin' a big toy house to the door o' Heaven—what d'yuh know about *that?* An' there was an angel stood there, she had grand wings, an' she was holdin' the door open. Well, the rich man he started to step in, but he wanted to take his fine house

along, an' he couldn't get it through the door. He tried an' tried, but it stuck. Say, he had to leave it behind, all right!"

One by one the frivolous and the sinful were seen to pass into outer darkness, Mrs. McPherson herself enacting the idle lady of wealth who squanders the fleeting hours over the tea-table. Incidentally, she indulged in a few jazz steps across the stage to enforce her point, and performed them with notable facility. So on, to the grand climax. Suddenly out burst a conflagration—"It was real fire, for sure!" one of the marvelling reported—the flames fell rapaciously upon the world, embracing it, destroying. The sinners had left for lower and unseen regions, the world had vanished.

And now, slowly descending from the top of the dome, appeared a huge painted scene of the Celestial City, sparkling with lights as it placed itself in the center just above Sister. Never having seen an authentic view of it before in any travelogue, I observed its architecture and streets with deep interest; the impression gained was that, in its tinted stucco effects and palm-lined boulevards, it strikingly resembles a realtor's depiction of Los Angeles. A mighty murmur rose; as stated in *The Foursquare Crusader* (the church's official news organ), "over 5,300 pairs of eyes watched one of the most spectacular illustrations ever presented on this platform."

Sister's resources are as the widow's cruse. She is never at a loss for novelty nor does she spare labor or cost. Many a theatrical producer would shrink from the outlay involved in staging such scenes. It is said that the lighting expenditure for one Sunday evening performance would make safe the streets of a dark village. Scene designers and painters are constantly employed. There have been "illustrations" such as a spectacle of brilliant red streamers carried by white-clad Crusaders in a vast interweaving design which must have suggested a ballet figure, the ribbon ends being finally gathered up at a central altar. Harpists were employed to interrupt from time to time her sermon on "The Song of Songs." I have been told that a peacock once strutted upon her platform to represent the proud before their fall.

The baptism by immersion is perhaps the greatest spectacle of all. Every Thursday evening there are fifty to one hundred and fifty converts who don white robes and become "dead to sin." "Oh, what a happy funeral!" cries the priestess. Curtains part upon an elaborate scene of palms, flowers, and grassy banks, below which the water ripples enticingly. Mrs. McPherson and one of the Brothers, standing waist-deep, immerse one, two, even five at a time; it is then that the steel muscle within that softly rounded arm displays itself. I have seen her, with only slight assistance, baptize three powerfully built young women with their arms linked, and have marvelled at the physical ease with which she so quickly raised them. . . . A youth like Dempsey rises, shaking his shaggy black mop as a Newfoundland might—"Praise, praise!" he cries, and his huge coiling muscles in pink flesh are seen through the wet white shirt as it clings. . . . "This sister is seventy-seven years old, bless her!" The pinched little white face strains up to the surface again, white hair matted. "Praise Him, hallelujah!" . . . Colored lights incessantly playing. . . .

Healing takes place on Saturday evenings, at which service Sister is aided by her associate, Brother Smith Wigglesworth, an English evangelist and author of *Worthy Words from Wigglesworth*, or *Tidbits for All on the Word of God*. Scores hasten (or limp, or creep, or are carried) to the altar. Discarded canes, crutches, and wheel-chairs are seen in the foyer. When Sister heals she lays hands upon the afflicted spot and prays. Brother's method is more athletic: he strips off his coat, advances to the front, squaring as though about to enter the ring. "This woman (crippled from rheumatism) hasn't knelt down for eight years. When I get through with

her *she'll kneel!*" She knelt three times after his manipulations upon her body, so forceful that an assistant had to support her lest she topple over. "I curse you, disease; I commawnd you to leave this woman!"

Those who witness the healing by hands, sometimes by oil, are of many opinions. The majority watch open-mouthed and round-eyed. "*I'll* say it's a miracle!" "Look at Gran'pa throw away his cane, will yuh!" A grasshopperish oldster is breaking forth in whoops of joy and prancing across the platform, kicking like a member of the Follies, waving his arms, and shouting hallelujahs, while Sister beholds with beaming pride. . . . "Aw, they been rehearsin' him for that act!" whispers a skeptic behind me. . . . One thing is patent: Brother Wigglesworth's pugilistic manner of handling Satan makes an excellent foil for the tripping and dimpling femininity which led an enraptured follower to sigh, "Sometimes Sister's such a cutie I think she'd leave Mary Pickford behind if she'd give up religion for the screen!"

One of the first questions raised by the observant and non-partisan visitor concerns the audience. Who are they that pack a huge building week after week, who have been doing so more and more ever since it was opened, almost five years ago?

Obviously, a great number are those scorned by the priestess as "curiosity seekers." Thousands of the transient population of the Southwest drift in and out because they "have heard of her." But there are other thousands who attend faithfully, a large part of them as signed members of this Church of the Foursquare Gospel, which claims, including its branches, to number ten thousand.

A uniformed member of the staff told me that it is estimated that two-thirds come into membership through healing. This seems likely in a land that has always been the sick man's Mecca, where flourishes every kind of physician, from the orthodox practitioner to the veriest charlatan. The rest drift in, from other denominations or none.

A glance about shows that they are largely represented by the Middle West farmer or small-townsman and his family who have come to form so large a proportion of Los Angeles' population. On every hand are old men and women, seamed, withered, shapeless, big jointed from a lifetime of hard labor with corn and pigs. The men wear what would be their Sunday-best in Iowa. The women are often gaudy in the short, tight, adolescent garb that some salesperson has foisted upon them, and their gray hair is bobbed. The couples drag tired old bones to the Temple and listen as if at the gates of Heaven itself.

Often the young people are quite as zealous. One sees earnestness, admiration, even exaltation now and then. One woman, I remember, held my eyes by her beauty, her rapture; throwing back her head, lifting her hands high, she was singing:

"Speak, my Lord, speak to me,
Speak, and I will be quick to answer Thee!"

She was not on earth; she was translated. There came to me a recollection of that tragedy which I believe to have been the greatest American play seen in New York during its season, "The Bride of the Lamb."

But although, after sitting in various parts of the auditorium and talking with many individuals, I was convinced that the majority are more or less ignorant, credulous, and susceptible to cheap emotionalism, nevertheless, I have met a few intelligent and educated persons who believe thoroughly in Sister's inspired leadership. Indeed, the conflicting opinions within the organization itself create one of its remarkable features. No doubt, most of the members worship at her feet and regard those enemies who criticize her private life and question her disposition of the funds as Satan's own host. But there are some who, strangely

enough, go so far as to join the church with tongue in cheek. "Yes, I belong," a certain woman told me. "I work for the poor, too. There's a lot o' money spent for charity. But that ain't accountin' for all of it. Oh, I ain't no fool!" The city is rife with gossip concerning her alleged personal extravagances; incidentally I may observe that I never felt warmly prompted to rally to the defense of Mrs. McPherson except when told by the scandalized that it is said she buys the most expensive lingerie in the best shops. For my part I fail to see why one cannot serve the Lord as well in pink silk as in red flannel.

But this astounding inconsistency, this mingling of belief and disbelief, I have never seen in any similar following. Apparently, the congregation worship not a prophet of the Lord, but a theatrical idol. For whatever their opinions may be, they revel in the entertainment which Sister provides. They treat the performance, whether a child-wonder's recitation, a negro's tune on the piccolo, an opera singer's solo, or an actor's delineation, with a sort of admiring familiarity. "Here comes Chris!" they say at Columbus' appearance. "My land, ain't the sinners great!" they exclaim during the Heaven and Hell spectacle. This is similar to the family interest which a stock company wins in time, with a happy anticipation of each week's novelty.

"It's a good show, anyway—we always get our money's worth," they say. The price is their own. "Don't stop at nickels and dimes—make it dollars for the Lord!" they are urged. Many small coins do, however, rub elbows with large greenbacks. Nevertheless, the sum total must be very large.

You may believe Aimee Semple McPherson to be a messenger direct from God Almighty to save His erring world. Or you may believe her to be the most unblushing fraud in the public eye today. Some do one, some the other; and there is every shade of opinion between. But the one fact that stands out is that her influence is incredible, that it carries as that of few evangelists has ever carried, that she is to-day one of the most amazing phenomena of power in this feverish, power-insane United States, and that the curious would like to know how, in popular parlance, the lady puts it over.

One of the most remarkable evidences of her hold upon men and women is the fact that she has been able to remain, and to keep on growing, in the *same place*. Most revivalists move on, as enthusiasm wanes. Mrs. McPherson came to Los Angeles more than a half dozen years ago, I understand, shaking her tambourine in a little tent to a handful of worshippers. It is said that she was a Holy Roller, and traveled in Canada and the United States with this tent which she sewed up with her own bleeding fingers whenever it blew down. To-day she is head of a tremendous organization, and her sermons are heard not only by thousands inside and outside the Temple, but by thousands more who tune in regularly on KFSG.

Most remarkable of all is the fact that she accomplishes what she does by means of such vehicles as her own sermons. Every successful preacher of the kind, as far as I can recall, has possessed some cleverness and originality in discourse, no matter how crude its expression. A certain coarse humor, sometimes rising to wit, has informed the utterances of the acrobatic Billy Sunday. But let Mrs. McPherson's deliverances be divorced from Mrs. McPherson's personality, and they fall to the depths of the banal. I have heard a number of her sermons, and I have before me a packet of seventeen of the most famous, in pamphlet form. To quote at random:

"How wonderful are the forces of nature! How mighty!"

"You and I are gardens, like trees of the planting of the Lord."

"Little butterfly flitting hither and yon—little humming birds that come humming around to get what honey

you can—where are you when the storm comes?"

"A mother with trembling hands was stroking back the dampened yellow curls from a marble-white brow."

"A tear trickled down the weather-beaten face and hung like a sparkling jewel in the rough-looking beard."

The ancient phrases, the ancient platitudes. Now and then they are enlivened by slang, as, when the wife of Potiphar was accusing Joseph, "She surely framed him up." Or, "Will you follow Him? Oh, men and women, this is brought to a show-down!" But it is not the slang of wit, which attracts a certain type of listener; rather, it carries the impression of being an unconscious lapse into the vernacular. Broadly humorous anecdotes are sometimes brought in, as, for instance, when during her frequent "stunt" of throwing Testaments for individuals in the audience to catch (a performance more skilful than any I have ever seen outside the circus) she relates in her curious nasal twang:

"One night I was doing this in San Francisco, and there was a lady there who was just a curiosity seeker. She didn't care about the Lord. But one of the Bibles missed the man I meant it for and it hit that lady right in the head. And what do you think she did? She dropped right down on her knees, and she said, 'Lord, take me! I never was so hard hit before, and I give up! I'm Yours!'"

But in the main her sermons are without even such diversion; they are mired hopelessly in a slough of analogy and metaphor (frequently much mixed), in hackneyed phrases, and in the type of sentimentalism styled as "sob sister." "The Scarlet Thread" is "considered to be the most magnificent of all Sister McPherson's superb sermons" according to its own foreword. It is a mass of commonplaces, melodrama, tawdriness, and cheap emotionalism. Her voice is noticeably damaged by years of strain, breaking in sharp nicks along its edge. Her "r" has the sound of a machine-drill. Hearing thus delivered a sermon utterly commonplace in itself, even to the least fastidious intellect, one marvels more and more at the power of the personality.

One grants that there are very wide "varieties of religious experience," and that different methods appeal to different tastes. Those who would never be even touched by a Handel composition on the organ of King's at Cambridge, or by a La Farge painting above the altar of the Ascension in New York may be plucked from the gutter and saved by far less subtle means. Furthermore, it is for us to admit, and not grudgingly, that certain niceties of the tongue have no connection with righteousness. "He would call to Mother and I," "Let everybody ketch the Temple spirit" may offend the finicky, but will never offend the Lord, we may well be thankful to say. But other preachers with great followings have been possessed of a stimulating freshness of thought; they have, according to their lights, had something to say and in a novel manner.

Aimee McPherson's power lies not here. Rather, it is the remarkable combination of showman and actress in her gifts which attracts and holds the multitude. As a director she is incomparable. While others are performing, she never for an instant permits interest to flag; at the first sign of restlessness she steps forward. "All join in with him now! 'Sail on!'" If a young singer's voice proves weak and, therefore, uninspiring, Sister snatches her own tambourine and drives home the rhythm. Let a recitation be dull, she will advance beaming to inquire if it isn't grand. Always she senses, with that swift, uncanny perception of hers, the slightest waning of attention; always, in emergency, she lifts those pink palms, flashes her infectious smile, and breaks into a hymn, catching back her hearers before they discover that they are slipping.

This complete control over the mood

of her audience she exercises from the instant she arrives upon the platform. Nothing gets away from her. Her grasp, from the first moment, is as tight and as all-inclusive as that of a violinist upon his instrument or a chariot racer upon his reins. Her hands tell the tale of nervous tension—her hands alone. For the rest she appears completely relaxed. Her chest is full with big breathing, her movements are swingingly free. But watch her hands while others are performing; they play restlessly, interlacing, touching a lock of hair, adjusting a cuff, collar, wrist-watch. They never relax except as she forces them to do so.

She chooses and uses her assistants with the utmost astuteness. Not only is Brother Wigglesworth, pummelling demons with powerful fist, an advantageous contrast, but a brunette singer enhances Sister's red-gold charm, while a slip of a timid young elocutionist gives to the leader a poised stateliness. No leading woman of the stage is more carefully supported for effect.

In matters such as this her peculiar dual role of the prima donna and that prima donna's own impresario is displayed. While acting as star, she contrives at the same moment to stand back and present that star. It is as though she were saying, "Here comes Aimee Semple McPherson, the most brilliant performer of the century. Hold your breath, watch her, hear her!" She does for herself what a manager is accustomed to do; she creates an overwhelming "Sister consciousness." Not only by keeping herself in the newspapers, but by a multitude of other means, she impresses the image. Large banners on the Temple cry, "Welcome to our Sister!" when she returns from a mission. Her photographs in countless poses appear on cards, bookmarks, pamphlets, and the like, which are sold in the foyer. On a page of the church's newspaper I counted the number of times that her name occurred: fifteen, to the Almighty's nine.

Every advertiser knows the psychological effect of ceaseless repetition. But no personality can long be impressed unless the personality is in itself remarkable. And Mrs. McPherson's magnetism is of that inexplicable sort which occurs but rarely in a puzzled world. In appearance she is wholesome, freshly groomed, comely—no more. But the glance of her companionable eye, the flash of her comprehending smile possess the electrical quality to an all-conquering degree. I confess to having felt it like a warm and overcoming current. My intellect may have sat back disdainfully. But I was relieved when the lady broke her appointment with me; had I met and talked with her as I intended, I am far from sure that I should have been able to write this article dispassionately. Her gift for taking everyone, from the individual to the vast audience, into her confidence, is incomparable; and it includes the Almighty as well. She will suddenly run forward, throw up her expressive hands, cry impulsively, "Oh, say, folks, you know I think God is (her voice catches)—oh, say, I think He's *just simply wonderful*, don't you?" It swoops them up. Here is the genius of intimacy. By these spontaneous, convincing outbursts she gathers together those five thousand people, draws the Lord down into their midst, holds them all there, together, tight, in a swift melting of emotion which brings men and women crowding to the altar with a weeping outburst of "Hallelujahs!" Hers may be assumed emotion, but the infectiousness of it is immense. Down she goes on her nimble knees, imploring Heaven . . . sobs are heard on every side. . . . I have seen an athletic youth rise shrieking in the audience, pallid, clutching the air and crying upon God—an able-looking boy who ought to be at some sane work or play instead of wrought to this delirium of "getting the Spirit" by an intoxicant far more dangerous than that taken from him by Volstead. "Talking in tongues" usually accompanies these attacks of hysteria,

and at times the assistance of sturdy ushers is required to handle the converts.

Mrs. McPherson's creed is clearly defined. Heaven is an "indescribably glorious habitation" where the righteous will be presented at the Throne "without spot or wrinkle"; and "wherein hosts of attending angels sweep their harps." Hell is "a place of outer darkness, and there into a lake that burns with fire and brimstone shall be cast the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars." It is needless to say in what light she regards Mr. Darwin. One trembles for him. Garden of Eden, serpent and apple are her origin of species, and her pictures of the Hereafter are authoritative. There is no hope of escape from either one or the other of those two dreadful futures—the lake of brimstone, or the eternal twanging of a harp. Her world consists of all-black sinners and all-white saints, and whichever one is he must pay a horrible penalty.

Her church does relief work among the poor. A staff of workers daily visits from house to house, carrying food, money, clothing, and "the Word." There have been cases of outcasts saved, especially from the drug habit. A woman who had worked in this social service said to me, "There's no question that a lot of money is spent to help the needy. Gossip says that a lot more is never accounted for. The whole organization looks to me like a queer mixture of good and bad." Sister is not restrained, at any rate, by over-delicacy in the matter of asking for funds. She always calls for "dollars for the Lord," and she does not blush to take up a second offering after a service, holding the plate herself while greenbacks take on legs and run down the aisles to her. In her published by-laws it is stated that each applicant for membership "must declare his loyalty to and willingness to assist in the support of this association, both with his substance as well as his undivided effort."

Whatever she has won she has worked for—worked in a ruthless drive, with no pity for her own fatigue. Six days a week she preaches, often more than once a day, hurling her tremendous force into every word she speaks. She utters platitudes in a way that gives them the guise of inspiration. And this is only a fraction of her labor. She organizes and manages a great business enterprise in the Temple. She writes articles, books. She plans and directs the weekly vaudeville with its ever-fresh "illustrations." She teaches in her Bible School, she marries, baptizes, heals, buries. Breathless with wonder, you ask how one human being ever accomplishes it all. "It's the Lord working in her," reply the faithful. "She sure is on the job. She'll retire a millionaire," retort the scoffers.

There is nothing ambiguous about her statement of authority. Again from the by-laws: "Each applicant shall express his recognition of the fact that 'a house divided against itself cannot stand,' and his adherence to the policy of this association, that there shall be no disloyalty, insubordination, whispering, criticizing, or backbiting of this association or its leaders." Here again one catches that glint of steel muscle rippling beneath the soft curves of Aimee McPherson's fleshly charm. One by one she casts off those who impede her progress of power; at last she has broken free even from the business partnership in which she and her mother labored in "the great white-heated flame of soul-winning"; at the height of her prowess she marches forward alone to her goal. It has been stated that her Lighthouse symbol represents a Salvation Navy which she visualizes, world-wide, rivalling the Army and sweeping souls to repentance over the ocean of sin. And it is very certain that, if this comes to pass, Mrs. McPherson herself will be the one ceaselessly celebrated upon an instrument of ten strings and upon the lute, upon a loud instrument and upon the harp.

THE EXPLOSION ON THE DUQUESNE

BY LELAND HALL

This is a true account of an experience of the author's on the voyage which subsequently took him to Timbuctoo and to the adventures set forth in his recent HARPER articles. Only the names of the vessel and the officers have been changed.—*The Editors.*

"IF YOU like the sea and if the captain's a good fellow, you'll have an enjoyable month of it."

That is the sum of what they said to me in the Paris offices after I had made certain of my passage to the West Coast of Africa on one of their freighters, the *Duquesne*. I like the sea tolerably well; but they could tell me nothing of the captain, on whom my enjoyment was certainly to depend. The city offices are interested only in the freight, not in the men who carry it.

I went up to Dunkerque to join the ship, and in the morning I made my way to the company's agency in the rue Carnot. The rooms were small and bare, and there was no one in them to respond to my modest cough. After a while a brisk young fellow came in from the street and hung up his hat.

"And what can I do for you, sir? Sorry if you have waited. We've a lot of cargo on hand, and I've been busy at the wharves."

I told him I was the passenger for the *Duquesne*.

"The passenger?" He was perplexed a moment, trying in his mind, perhaps, to fit me in somehow with the cargo. "Oh, yes, the *Duquesne*. Well, she's here. The captain came in yesterday afternoon, and we told him he was to have a passenger."

"Did he seem put out?"

The young man smiled. "I don't remember that he did. He seemed a nice enough fellow, rather young. Come on; I'll take you down to the wharves now and introduce you to your ship."

We went a long, long way on the quays, under the bows of many iron ships. The air was angular with the arms of cranes and derricks, with hoisted bales swinging and swaying aloft.

Finally we turned off on a pier.

"*Voici la Duquesne*," said my mentor.

She was low in the water alongside the pier, with very little superstructure; she was grimy as a coal-heaver, and all her iron sides and her stubborn funnel were black. We clambered aboard somehow, and stumbled over heaps of coal-bricks on the deck. We approached a big fellow who was watching the stevedores and giving an order now and then.

"I don't know where the captain is," he said. "I am the chief mate, Gayot. Can I be of service?"

When I was introduced to him as the passenger he welcomed me hospitably. He was the sort of man you liked at first sight and instinctively trusted. He had a remarkably fresh, clear skin and genial eyes.

"I'm afraid I can't leave the deck for a few minutes, but the steward will show you your cabin. And here he is now. *Holà! Emile, venez voir monsieur le passager.*"

Emile, in a very sweaty shirt, made his way through the clutter of the deck and greeted me respectfully. Him, too, I liked immediately. He had a round Breton head, with blue eyes, and a small voice.

"Ah, monsieur," he said, "I did not expect you so early. Your cabin—I have not had time. All the boat is covered with coal-dust."

But I persuaded him to take me to my cabin, which we entered from a short passage off the dining saloon. A moment later we heard voices in the saloon. Dominating them all, one rang high and clear, speaking rapidly, incisively. It was the voice of a nervous, brilliant man, and a young one.

"*St!*" Emile whispered. "*Monsieur le capitaine.*"

"Is he a good fellow, Emile?" I whispered, for I felt that Emile was my friend.

"Oh, monsieur, he is the best captain in the world."

The next moment the captain himself appeared in the door. The blue of his critical, keen eyes was alight with a magnetic fire. He was tall and wiry, and when he pushed back his cap, with its three bands of gold braid, his hair was wild.

"*Ah, monsieur le passager,*" he said, very brusque, and with the slightly ironical inflection I was so often to listen for. In the French fashion he barked out his name, Leduc; and while we shook hands, I gave him my name, at which he made a face.

"I speak English a little," he said, "but your names—they are unpronounceable. I tell you beforehand, no one will know your name. You'll remain *monsieur le passager.* I'd like to present you to my wife. She, and the wife of the chief engineer, go with us as far as Cardiff, where I have to take on a consignment of coal. But the ladies have gone to their cabins. Emile will look out for you. Come aboard when you like. We sail at noon tomorrow. We shan't wait, you know."

His whole presence was a challenge, not less bracing for being gay; and I felt at once he was a man to whom dubiousness must have been intolerable. Life was clear.

We sailed at noon the next day, every detail in order. We went out from the port into a splendid sun and a high west wind, the Channel green and tossing. Emile served us lunch in the little saloon. He was as ever in his shirt, with sleeves rolled above the elbow; and Emile was always sweating, good, honest sweat, I'm sure, from good, honest worry.

Madame Leduc was as calm as her husband was nervous. She had deep-set dark eyes, and she smiled tolerantly at her husband's wit. Their devotion to each other was evident; they were almost like lovers, though they had been married five years and had already three children.

As for the chief engineer, he was much older than the captain, a short fattish man, with a bald head, and something of a dandy. I was slow to believe that he never had trouble with his engines. Yet this was a fact; the engines worked for that seemingly stupid man. So did every bit of machinery aboard the boat. I later realized that he seemed dull chiefly, perhaps, by contrast with the flashing turbulence of the young captain. For that matter, which of us did not?

At Cardiff it rained heavily during the couple of days we spent there. They loaded the coal at night. I can still see in my mind the flare of torches through the driving rain, and hear the shouts of English dock hands and the clanking of the hoists. They made room for it in hold No. 3, stacking the cargo already in that hold to one side and building a partition to protect it from the wet coal. During the subsequent voyage the captain was a little anxious lest this partition give way and the other cargo in the hold be damaged.

When the ladies left, Madame Leduc took my hand and wished me a pleasant voyage. I attempted a joke.

"I'll keep close watch on your husband," I said. "You may trust me to report to you faithfully."

"But," she replied without a smile, "I have absolute confidence in my husband."

We left Cardiff that afternoon. As we went out the Bristol Channel the weather began to clear. Through a rift in the clouds the sun shone level across the water, which was green as emerald under the mustard-colored shadow of our smoke, and full on the rusty yellow face of the Devon cliffs. The misty wrack over the moors was heavy with rose. In the middle of the night we left the Long Ships astern and took a southerly course for the Canaries.

Meanwhile the captain, now that we were really under way and everything about the boat was in order, was restless. There were no tasks on which he could spend his energy. The routine of fair weather and an unchanging course he could never patiently endure. Now he swooped down upon me as at least something curious and strange, and hailed me up to his cabin off the bridge.

"Who are you," he asked, "and why are you here?"

"Well," I said, "my career has been in colleges. Bored with the intellectual life, I thought I'd seek refreshment—"

"I understand," he interrupted. "You've chosen to travel with us because you think we have no brains. Flattering, I'm sure, *monsieur le passager*."

Instantly he was off on a brilliant tirade. It was always so. He asked you a question, imputed an answer, and basted you with his wit and his feverish eloquence. But there was an impersonality about it; it was not you he attacked, but a theory or an idea he chose to identify with you, to the refutation of which his wit was more than adequate. He had wit, and a very caustic humor. I soon gave over any attempt to set myself right before him, and not wholly because such effort was futile, but because I came to look forward to, and to treasure afterwards, those minutes on deck, in his cabin, over the coffee in the saloon at night, when of a sudden he loosed his amazing, clear vehemence. The engineer and I—we might be ourselves the target of it—sat spellbound, and Emile leaned bright-eyed and breathless against the door frame.

It was so he tackled life itself: asking it questions, which he answered out of his own extraordinary vitality and fearlessness; and it was easy to doubt if life could ever answer such a man otherwise.

He was only twenty-seven years old, the youngest captain in the service of his company, which owned a large fleet. I suspect that he had not worked up to his position, but had been promoted to it in the confusion following the War, possibly with the aid of some influence. So he outranked men far older than he, even on the *Duquesne*. This gave him no pause whatsoever. Only two men among the officers and the crew did he respect: the chief engineer and Monsieur Gayot, the first mate, the big fellow who had welcomed me aboard and whom everybody on the boat, even the captain himself, admired.

Day after day we went peacefully south and came into the trades. Not a part of the ship but the young captain made me free of. He had me on the bridge to steer, daily he had me at his hand to show me how he made his reckonings; had he a visit to make astern or one forward, it was: "*Venez, monsieur le passager, venez voir mon navire.*" Little by little I got to know most of the crew, the stokers, the coal-passers, the mechanics, the sailors, almost without exception Bretons. I went to the captain with my enthusiasm. He would laugh.

"Good fellows, monsieur, undoubtedly, but stupid, but incredibly stupid."

"I can't judge of that," I began.

"But I can," he interrupted, "and what's more, I have to. And I must never forget that these men are stupid, *monsieur le passager*. Every life aboard this ship is in my keeping and is my charge. Do you know what threatens them night and day? Their own carelessness. I can never be sure of any one, that he will not neglect some detail of his duty and bring us all into danger."

We were in the very stern and he said:

"Those birds that follow us close to

the water, do you know what they are?"

I fitted them with a name.

"No," the captain smiled, with a little bitterness which I fancy was play acting. "Some day you will see me flying among them. Those birds, I learned as a boy, are the souls of ships' officers who have been harsh to their crews."

He and the chief engineer had memories of a former voyage, of something dangerously like a mutiny. The chief had told me the captain had been too uncompromising.

"I won't compromise," the captain said to me now. "I am the master on any ship I command. Do I seem harsh in my judgments, harsh in my discipline? It is because I am responsible for my ship and for every man aboard her. They don't know that, those stupid sailormen. They think I'm harsh because I like to be. Not at all. Since I must take the blame for all that goes wrong, and since they are careless and ignorant, they must obey me. Only so can I assume my responsibility. And I do assume it, *monsieur le passager*."

"That is evident," I said, sincerely. "And you are not afraid?"

"Only of man's stupidity, monsieur. I am not a fatalist. Come, shall we go see Emile's pigs? They are growing fat. We should reach Teneriffe to-morrow. A wonderful landfall, the peak of Teneriffe. A good voyage, *n'est-ce pas?*"

So it had been.

II

Between five and six in the morning the captain called to me through my port that we had sighted the land, and I went on deck in my pajamas, for in the latitude of the Canaries the air is mild night and day. I remained on deck as we drew nearer, and about seven the captain shouted from the bridge for me to come up and see the peak of Teneriffe, which is usually hidden by clouds from vessels approaching from the north, but which this brilliant morning was clear. The vision seemed a good augury. The bay, too, was most beautiful, and the mountainous island, rising steep and dry from the sea, colored like a dream. Over the blue waters the flying fish flew like humming birds.

After the pilot came aboard to conduct us to a mooring in the bay, I returned to my cabin to shave and dress for shore. It must have been about eight when I heard the anchor go overboard; and between shaving the right side of my face and the left, I looked out my port on the town of white and rose and pale blue houses and saw the colors reflected in the water between our moorings and the quays.

No sooner had I gone back to my shaving than I started at the shock and noise of an explosion. The sailors who had been talking by the rail outside my port ran forward, ducking their heads; and as I stood instinctively hunching my shoulders, I saw debris fall splashing into the water alongside. My first thought was of the boilers, and I listened for the hiss of steam. But I heard none, and I saw a cloud of brown smoke soiling the air and the water and rolling along the deck and in my porthole. It was sinister.

A minute or two after, I went out to ask of a sailor what had happened. "An explosion in hold No. 3."

I heard the captain's ringing voice. He was coming rapidly along the deck with the chief engineer. Both were blackened. I smelled almost before I saw that the captain's hair was burned, and likewise his eyebrows and his eyelashes. The skin hung loose from one side of his forehead and from his lip, and in shreds from his hands, which were red and glistening with oil.

"Look at my eyes," he said, "and tell me if they are burned."

Though they were blood-shot and watering, I could see no sign of their being seriously hurt. But perhaps because his face was so smeared with coal-dust, he thought I could not really tell; and he came into my cabin and asked me to wash his face and look again. Yet I had no sooner soaked my sponge than he

ran off elsewhere. He was certainly in great pain, though perhaps too much excited to feel it.

There was nothing for me to do then but to finish my dressing, which I did; while the noise of confusion aboard died away to silence, and all the smoke blew away, and the sun shone clear once more over the blue water.

It was in such a restored peace that I later stepped from my cabin; and then I saw on the deck, which was shady and cool, and against the deep-blue translucent water at the side, a strange figure: a man with a black face and a white body, naked save for a sheet knotted round his neck, a sheet which swelled and fluttered in the breeze, which revealed rather than hid his gleaming nakedness. He was walking up and down slowly like an awkward mechanical toy. Against the rail a couple of sailors leaned heavily, watching him. He was moaning softly. When he came towards me I saw his arms. From the elbows down the skin stood off from them like stiff sheets of parchment, and from his hands the blood was slowly dripping. It was Monsieur Gayot, the first mate, the best beloved on board.

He begged for water. When I held the glass to his lips, I could see that the face was indeed what was left of the genial face I had known. The eyes, suffused with anguish, were yet clear.

We poured olive oil on him again, for someone had already drenched the sheet in it; but we none of us knew what else to do, even whether to give him more water, which he cried for, or perhaps wine to strengthen him. His body, too, was burned, and his shoulders and his feet and his legs, and we dared not put an arm round him to help, for fear of increasing his torment. Trembling violently from head to foot, he walked slowly up and down in his sheet, heroic enough to suppress his groans but every now and then crying out in spite of his will. Never shall I forget the parade of that grotesque figure before us who stood powerless to do one single little thing to ease his pain. After what seemed an eternity, a launch came to take him ashore. The captain, reappearing, quietly ordered the radio boy to accompany him to the hospital. He added to me, "Monsieur, you will be good enough to stay with me."

We got the captain, too, into a boat; and the only service I could render him was to drop oil on his face and neck and hands from a silly little cruet I had had the sense to re-fill, and to help hold a coat to keep the sun's rays from burning deeper on what was already so deeply burned.

That boat ride over the blue bay, the water-front of the Spanish town, the ride in an automobile through streets so narrow that we had to wait and wait to get through, and even then to jolt up over the sidewalk and bang and scrape against the rosy plaster walls! Never a word of complaint from the captain.

At last we reached the Spanish hospital and, passing through iron grills and along corridors, came into the courtyard. The sun was not yet very high and there were palm trees growing there, too, so that it was a cool relief after our ride. The convalescents and the cripples on the benches eyed us mutely. All was silent save for the cries of the chief officer, whose wounds they were bandaging in one of the many little rooms on the court—in the one marked San Pablo.

Here the captain first gave way.

"I can't look at him," he said. "I can't. I'm afraid of him."

I walked him up and down the court, talking the best I could to drown out the sound of those spasmodic cries. The clock chimed: only a quarter past nine, scarcely more than an hour since we had come so happily to anchor.

Finally the interne called to us, and from the shadow of the room where the mate lay the lovely Spanish sisters came out to take the captain in for his treatment. Since they had all their bandages and their medicaments there, the captain followed them in.

Outside the door, the radio boy and I waited with the Spanish consignees. The convalescents drew nearer and nearer and stood round us, and the cripples hobbled up. Now and then a sister, coiffed in a stiffly starched headdress with wide wings, went silently from one room to another along the courtyard. They all seemed to me beautiful. It was a relief just to know that somebody was at hand who could *do* something.

Unexpectedly, the captain, his head bandaged but his hands beating helplessly naked, staggered from the room. I caught him before he could fall. Still he had not fainted. I held him while they bandaged his hands, fanning him with the Spanish agent's beautiful straw hat. He went very weak. But it was not the pain that took his strength; it was the nearness of the mate. I don't know how I knew that, but I was certain of it; and I know that what subsequently broke the captain's will was the thought of his chief officer.

It's a strange feeling to wait for an interpreter. We formed a little group at the door of the room marked San Pablo: the chief interne, unshorn but kind of face, with the dark Spanish eyes I later saw bent on us from the crowd about, not only in curiosity but in compassion as well; a younger interne, like a medieval apprentice, the collar of his military uniform showing above his khaki duster; two sisters, standing a little apart, one most beautiful, the other small and misshapen, but a goodness shining in her little blue eyes that may yet redeem the world; the Spanish agents; the captain, bandaged like a ghastly scarecrow; the radio boy, the convalescents, and I. And our questions came from the captain to me in French, went from me to the agent in English, from the agent to the chief interne in Spanish. We hung then on the interne's eyes, his brows, his moving hands, his melodious but incomprehensible low answers. Then back these answers came to us over the road the questions had taken. The convalescents were the first to hear the news, then I, then the captain. The mate was grievously burned; hardly could he live. Perhaps— But, no; he will die. When? No one can tell. It is not always the burns, we know, but what follows.

So, oddly enough, without more ado we stamped out of the court, out of the hospital, nervously, rapidly.

Endless ship's business now to do, and the captain rose up again in all that energy and strength of will which I had watched during the whole voyage. It was as if the mate were not wounded at all, but aboard the vessel tending to the unloading, as if the captain himself, so frightful in his bandages, were unhurt. We kept an eye on him, fanned him, forced a glass of wine on him now and then; while in office after office, sleepy rooms with windows giving into the palm leaves, he barked out his orders, his telegrams. "Mate seriously burned, notify wife tactfully," went along with the business of insurance, damages to ship and cargo, repairs, delays, dry dock, experts.

Sometimes the radio boy and I stayed outside in the street. We were always the center of a crowd, silent ourselves because we could not speak Spanish, the crowd silent, too, as anyone might be before men who seemed to have dropped from calamity. Two young clerks took pity on us and with eloquent gestures and smiles beckoned us in from the street to a wareroom that was cool, and there gave us sweet Canary wine. Afterwards they led us on into the courtyard, the patio, with its palm trees and its big cage of Canary birds.

Here, after a while, the radio boy told me what he had seen of the explosion, he having been at that moment at his post, which overlooks the hold. He had run down to the mate and torn off some of the flaming clothes. But what he remembered most vividly, laughing as he told it and making me laugh, was the plunge of some ten young Spaniards

from their skiff in which they had rowed out to the *Duquesne* just before the explosion. At the shock, these ten men dived as one into the blue water, and after the smoke had cleared, there they were, still swimming for the shore, and their empty boat still bobbing alongside the *Duquesne*.

Shortly before noon we all returned to the hospital to see the doctor-in-chief, who had not yet come to his office at the time of our first call. We tiptoed round the court, hotter now, and looked into the dark little room marked San Pablo. We saw the mate's chest slowly rise and fall in his breathing. Nothing else moved, except the flies crawling on his bandaged hands and arms, which stood up stiffly like wadded posts from the bed.

With beautifully modulated formality, the doctor-in-chief received us, an unforgettable figure in his long linen coat. His eyes, when he listened, were somber, but when he spoke, almost too brilliant in that face, color of ivory.

Again our round game of question and answer. As for the captain, he cannot use his hands for at least a month; he would be very unwise to attempt to go on with his ship into the tropics, where the slightest infections are to be dreaded. Better telegraph for another captain to meet us at Las Palmas. And—O, yes, of course, for another mate. For the mate, he is grievously burned. He may live a week, ten days, twelve—but surely he will die. A chance for life? Yes; always a chance.

When we got back to the ship and found the chief engineer, I had to laugh. His round face was red and shiny, his eyes big in his head. There was no denying him his loquacious say. He was right beside the hold when the explosion came. I had seen his face earlier that morning, had I not? He had to spend two hours with tweezers getting the coal specks out of his skin. The first mate would not die. He had seen stokers terribly burned, but they had not died. Would I be good enough to look closely round his eyes? He did not wish to be disfigured with coal specks. He had spent two hours with the tweezers, but he feared he had not got all out. It was a wonder he had not been killed [and this, indeed, it was] but the first mate would not die. He had seen stokers—and so on.

Meanwhile we had some sort of lunch, and I watched the captain, who was tortured not only by his burns, alas, but by his thoughts, and I waited for what I dreaded but what I knew would come.

It came with a loud cry.

"My God, I'm *not* to blame!"

We could silence him, but soothing him was out of the question. A little later he broke forth again, with the same anguish:

"I sent him down into the hold to see if the partition was intact. I would have gone down with him. I opened the hatch with him. I smelled nothing, no smoke, no gas of any kind. I stayed by the open hatch. I called down, 'Can you see?' He called up, 'When my eyes get used to the dark I shall see.' God knows, I was on the point of going down to him when the blast hurled me back."

"Ah," said the chief engineer, "he struck a match."

But the mate did not smoke. It was hardly likely he had a match on him.

We could not make the captain rest. He was almost mad with his pain and with his thoughts. Yet his head was clear. I must out with my Corona and type his report, which I did in a sort of growing nightmare. For I knew what was in his mind, the terrible struggle was plain in the turn of his phrases. He was hinting, hinting that he had not been to blame, that he, too, was atrociously injured, that he had not abandoned his officer like a coward. We got to the sentence I could have typed without waiting for his dictation.

"I was myself about to go down into the hold—"

There he stopped.

"Tear that up," he said. "It's too long. We'll begin again."

Which we did: "*Monsieur le Consul, J'ai l'honneur de vous informer que ce matin à huit heures trente une très violente explosion s'est produite dans la cale trois—*" And so on, a terse masterpiece of half a page, in which the only mention the captain made of himself was his having ordered the mate to go down into the hold.

Just as this was done, Emile came into the room. For the first time since lunch the captain sat down. He beat his bandaged hands on the table. Then he looked fixedly at Emile a long while, and then at me.

"Monsieur," he said, "humanity is selfish. We are selfish like animals. I am glad I am alive. You understand me? That it is *I* who am alive. I am an animal."

Without any warning his voice broke. It was like a spurt of tears from his swollen eyelids, not just weeping. I made my way into my cabin to re-type the report with carbon.

III

But he was by no means done for, and all his old authoritative manner came back to receive the visit of the inspectors, Goya types, all, who came out in a splendid launch about four. I could not go back into the saloon for that conference; besides, one of the inspectors spoke French. But I heard the captain's voice dominating it.

For my part, I looked over the rail, fascinated by the launch, which might have belonged to Sinbad the Sailor, bobbing there in the blue, the pellucid blue water. The water is indeed so much a color that you feel that you and the boats round you are buoyed up on some magic form of liquefied light, on fluid sapphires that in changing their state have lost none of their coolness and none of their translucence. The launch itself was white without, trimmed with apple-green. Over the stern seat lay a cloth of blue, bordered with bright red. There was a barefoot indolent Spaniard at the bow with a boat hook, and another at the stern; but though they looked up often, they never gave us a smile or any sign of recognition.

As the sun went lower, the mountains rose up in their shadows and the day was quickly finished. The conference trailed out of the saloon and along the deck to survey the hold where the accident had occurred and look at the damage done: little enough—a ventilator top blown off, tarpaulins scorched or torn, a dent in the iron rail, a plank of the landing boat stove in. Meanwhile, the mate lay over there in the town behind the campanile, in the care of strangers who could not speak his tongue.

When the captain, thrashing his arms and talking very shrill, led the conference back along the deck, I asked one of the committee, who could speak English, if he would take the radio boy and me ashore in the launch with them, that we might visit the mate. I further asked if he would be good enough to find us an auto to take us to the hospital and wait for us, and even to arrange with a boatman to return us to the ship: for we could not speak Spanish, and the boat was moored a long way out in the bay. Not only did the Spaniard grant our every request; he offered to accompany us. Through the whole affair the Spaniards aided and befriended us with a truly noble sympathy.

It was nearly dark when for the third time that day we went into the courtyard of the Spanish hospital. As we drew near the door of the room marked San Pablo, the convalescents, sitting on the bench beside it, lifted their hands and waved us to a standstill. But I was far enough advanced to see the black-robed priest in the room, and I thought we were already too late.

"*Muerto?*" we whispered.

They shook their heads.

No; he was not dead. The French consular agent, who had joined us, explained that the sisters had thought a

priest might comfort the wounded man. So the priest had come, and the mate had just finished his confession. One of the sisters, who came to stand with us, did not think the mate knew he was going to die. Nor did the consul think so. The consul's wife had been there in the afternoon and had asked the mate if she might not take down a letter from him to his wife. "But, no," the mate had said. "The captain will have telegraphed. There is nothing more to say till I am better."

After the priest had glided swiftly from the room we went in; and we found the mate seemingly better. He was calm, as if his suffering had been eased. Though he could speak only a little at a time, his voice had its natural ring.

He told us that he would indeed be happy to have a man come from the boat and spend the night with him. His mind was perfectly normal. We asked him if there was one on the boat he would welcome more than another; and he answered sensibly, "Someone who can speak a bit of this lingo. I think one of the coal-passers knows some Spanish."

Then, as a very little talking evidently took his breath, we bade him good-night and went away.

The radio boy and I returned on foot to the quay, pretty silent. There, from a shadow, a young Spaniard stepped forth, touching his hat to us. He whistled, and Sinbad's launch left her moorings and came to us through the moonlight. So then we went back over the moonlit bay to the *Duquesne*, wondering what we should tell the captain. We made the boatmen understand that they were to wait at the landing-ladder to take a man back with them.

We began a hopeful report of it, so that the captain might sleep. He seemed scarcely to heed it, his mind apparently on the letter he had been dictating to the chief engineer, which lay unfinished under the light. But in the midst of our planned speech he burst out:

"And did he tell you that I had left him down in the hold to die?"

He recovered himself. And when the coal-passer, half washed, half dressed, stood breathless in the doorway, the captain ordered Emile to give him a bottle of champagne to take to his chief officer.

Of the evening I remember only the question the engineer, Emile, and I put to one another. How had the mate got out of the hold?

Emile whispered that the mate had told the second engineer that three times he had fallen back from the ladder, and only the fourth time had got to the top.

And I do remember, too, the chief engineer's constant reiteration, "He will live. I have seen stokers worse burned than he."

In the morning I got up shortly after five to copy a report. About seven the Spanish agent appeared in the doorway of the saloon.

"The mate died half an hour ago in the hospital," he said. "Is the captain up yet?"

I had not seen him.

"I will return to the hospital to see what I can do. Tell the captain I will call later to take him to have his burns dressed."

A half hour later the captain found me alone in the saloon, still copying that report.

"Monsieur," he said, "our good mate is dead."

I could think of nothing to say to the captain except that if the mate had to die it was better for him to die at once thus than to linger on suffering. He replied, "Yes, it's all over for him now. We must think of that unhappy woman in France." He never spoke but once of her afterwards in my hearing. He had not slept; but his energy was as dominating as ever, and while I waited to take him to the hospital, I heard him shouting his orders here and there over the ship.

IV

It must have been about half-past eight when the captain and I got to the

hospital. The Spanish agent and the radio boy were with us. Mechanically we wandered round the court, which was shady and cool, passing the room marked San Pablo, which was entirely empty now save for the bare bed frame. We kept right on to the side of the square on which we had entered, and there stopped in the bright rays of the sun, which was just peering over the top of the building. The captain asked no particulars as to the mate's death except to make sure of the hour for his report, and to ask if he had suffered. Abruptly, then, and very directly, he asked if it were permissible to remove the wedding ring from the dead mate's hand; and being told that it was so, and that it would be possible, as well, to do so, requested that the hospital authorities attend to the matter in the course of the day. The doctor said that the ring must be removed at once, and that the hospital authorities would have no right to do so without the presence of witnesses. The captain at once ordered us to accompany the doctor and the sister.

There was no delay. We went through corridors encumbered with barrels of plaster and bits of scaffolding, to a lost courtyard and into the room where the mate's body lay under a blanket. They pushed back the bandages to disclose the ring for our identification. They removed the ring, then, without difficulty, and so skilfully and yet so tenderly that pity in us quite overcame every other feeling. The sister replaced the blanket and we returned swiftly across that lost courtyard, where nothing grew. Pointing up to holes broken in the walls and new, bare girders, the doctor said in Spanish something about repairs and extensions, together with an apology for the clutter which was in evidence.

We rejoined the captain and the agent. The captain said to the wireless boy, "You will see that the ring is sent to Monsieur Gayot's widow." Then we all followed the doctor, up a broad stair, along corridors from which we looked into wards full of women in bed, under arches which bore the inscription: *Neustra Señora de Las Dolores*, or something similar, and at last into a high, bare, white room. There was a cupboard on the wall; a water-tap jutted out over a stained basin. Wheeled to one side stood an iron stretcher table, and near the middle of the room a rickety operating chair. Sun flooded through the high open windows, the green shutters of which were three-quarters ajar, and we saw its blinding brilliance on the sea.

They took the bandage off the captain's right hand. On the backs of the fingers, which had not been so badly burned, stood blisters from half an inch to an inch high; but the back of the hand itself looked like putty, and blood was seeping along the sides. So it was on his neck, his lips, his nose, his forehead. Everything was hugely swollen.

His head first on one side, then on the other, the doctor calmly studied the appearance of the hand, while we anxiously fixed our eyes on his face. There had been enough talk of infection, in three languages, to frighten us all. Finally the doctor said something rapidly; the Spanish agent stood back with a sigh of relief, and gave me the word, which I passed on to the captain, who was in a horrible suspense, that all was well. But the captain remained bent over in despair.

In the midst of this, two men had come unannounced into the room. The captain seemed to smell them. He sprang up suddenly, saying to me, "That man is the undertaker." I never thought to ask him how he knew. It was, nevertheless, the undertaker, whom the consular agent had brought along with him. I had not the heart to listen to the conversation which began; for I saw that the captain, though he stood stiffly up before his interlocutors, was as if at bay; and I thought it an indecent act on the part of the consul to force this conference upon him while he was under the full strain of his treat-

ment. So I don't know what was said. I only know that without any warning the captain's voice suddenly rose. The phrase sounded very sharp in the room. "On no pretext—" But he got no farther. His voice broke and the tears sprang from his eyes, as they had sprung out the day before when he was alone in the saloon with Emile and me. He turned away. Then the consul had sense to lead off the undertaker.

After they had gone, the captain asked for water, and then for more. I suspect the sister put some restorative in the second glass.

An hour later, when we came down from the bandaging, we found the undertaker waiting for us in the courtyard. The captain walked by him without looking to right or left. The agent dropped back for a hurried interchange, but soon rejoined the captain, who had gone as far on as possible with me. He put us both in the automobile waiting outside the gate. He was about to get in himself when the undertaker came hurrying up and caught his sleeve. They talked on the right of the car, and then they walked round and talked on the left. The poor undertaker's face was worried in the extreme, for, after all, his business was urgent, and he could not go on with it without proper authorization. He was a young, slight fellow. Though he had the olive skin of the Spaniard, his eyes were small and his nose humped at the bridge and flattened at the nostrils, so that he looked part Indian. The Spanish agent broke away by telling the chauffeur to drive on. The undertaker stepped back against the crowd which hemmed us in, that crowd of singularly handsome faces, bent from every angle inquisitively but pitifully on the captain. The car pushed through the crowd and, as we turned, I saw the undertaker still standing where we had left him, with the same intensely worried expression on his face, his papers hanging uninscribed from his dejected hands.

During the rest of the morning the captain's energy was frightful. In every office he padded up and down the floor like a panther in a cage, his arms swinging in their slings. His decisions and his orders he seemed to fling back over his shoulder, as if, already on the move God knows where, he were gaining speed straight hence, not just hurling himself back and forth. Indeed, as the morning went on, his pace became more and more rapid; and when you had moved chairs and tables out of his line, you could only wonder if he would eventually dash himself against the walls which stopped him.

But when we got back to the ship and we had gone into the saloon for lunch, he suddenly said, "*C'est fini*"; and lying flat on his back along the bench beside the table, he gave up. That was Friday noon, thirty hours after the explosion. During those hours he had been in great pain. He had practically neither eaten nor slept. Nobody knows what moral torture he had endured, what a battle he had waged single-handed against the nightmares his sense of responsibility sprang upon him. Yet he had neglected no detail of the ship's business. He had handled in that short time, shaken as he was, endlessly detailed affairs of testimony, of expert reports, of damages, of insurance, of repairs, for which ordinarily a week would have been allowed. And though he had been unable to bring himself to speak again of his chief officer, or even to look at him, and though he shrank from the undertaker, it had been he, nevertheless, who had thought to send back at least the wedding ring to the widow.

V

The various committees absolved him from all blame. The insurance agents particularly would have contested any prejudiced judgment in his favor. They conceded even that it was unlikely the mate had ever lighted a match. There is said to be a kind of gas released from wet coal which is invisible and odorless, and any volume of which explodes on contact

with air. So far as I know, it was the unanimous opinion of the experts that it was the explosion of such gas in hold No. 3 which had brought tragedy to our ship. To prevent the accumulation of such gas the hatches of holds in which coal is carried are supposed to be opened from time to time, and the ventilators so regulated as to assure a continual change of air in the hold. The experts accused the captain of no slackness as regards such precautionary measures. The exceptional wetness of the coal—how the rain poured from the skies over Cardiff the night they loaded it!—and the week of very light winds, which were not strong enough to blow down the ventilators and force a draft: these conditions excused the captain of blame for the unhappy event. His weakness lay, alas, in his very strength: he would not deny his responsibility.

It was even deeper than that with him. He had believed in his own vigilance and his own fearlessness as a protection against danger, both for himself and for the men in his keeping. When, therefore, in the circumstances of this explosion aboard his ship, death surprised his favorite officer, he had only his own fearlessness to question. Therein he questioned his character, his life, and even life itself; and for the time being no answer could relieve his intolerable doubt.

We buried the mate in Teneriffe. It was a sad business and a miserable grave, high up on the mountainside in the dust and lava, without a tree or a bush or a blade of grass. When the sailors returned to the ship before nightfall they stood at the rail and sought with their keen eyes some sign on the steep and darkening mountain to mark the grave where they had left their officer. Sailors have sad things to say when they leave a comrade in a land which is not his home. The chief engineer pushed them gently aft, lest their voices wake the captain, who, we hoped, was sleeping in his cabin above, behind the door where Emile slept crouching.

That night in the moonlight the chief and I walked up and down. Our bare feet made no noise on the deck, and we talked very low.

"I never," I said, "have known so brilliant and so dauntless a young man; and I wonder what will happen, now that he has dashed his will against this tragedy."

"He will recover," said the chief. "He is foolish to blame himself so."

"Could he," I whispered, hesitating, "have gone down in the hold to the mate?"

"Monsieur, you should have seen the flame of that explosion. The captain was leaning over the hatchway. The blast hurled him back ten feet. You have seen how his head and his hands were burned. His mouth and his throat have been burned inside, as you know, and his nostrils. He could not have gone down into the hold."

On the next day came a cable ordering the captain to stay by the ship as far as Las Palmas at least, and suggesting that he go on with her to Dakar. The city offices are interested only in the freight, not in the men who carry it. Going on to Dakar was completely out of the question, we cabled back; and they answered then from Paris to go on to Las Palmas and wait there for the new mate and the new captain.

So, officially, the affair was ended. It was only a few hours' run across from Teneriffe to Las Palmas, and the captain was on the bridge, nervous and depressed. Because of the bandages you could see little more of his face than his eyes in their sered and swollen lids, and there was no ray of hope in them. The explosion which had killed his mate had proved the spirited creed of his young manhood a false creed, and the world was havoc before him.

"My wife and children," he used to say during the days we had to wait, "I shall mend better with them."

His voice was dull, save for that note of longing.

COTTON DOLLY

A STORY

BY ADA JACK CARVER

IT WAS noontime, and blazing hot. Old Cotton Dolly sat on the little front porch of her cabin, her eyes closed, her hands in her lap. She sat motionless, listening—listening for the slipping sound of Tuggle's feet through the field. It was August, dry and still, with a low-hanging sky. Leaves were beginning to drift from the cottonwoods and the maples, and across the branch in the swamp, where witch-buttons grew, Cotton Dolly had seen buzzards sitting about in the trees, on the dead cypress stumps. . . . In August you can smell death. If sick folks can get through August they're safe for a while. But death gets busy in August. Cotton Dolly began to croon, softly, under her breath:

> *"Who dat done slip in de house*
> *In a black robe wid silver shoes,*
> *In a hat wid a star on it? . . .*
> *Don' look at me, Deat',*
> *Look de udder way."*

No wonder she sat and thought of death, so lonely, with no one to look to, no one but Tug, who had put her away in this tumbled-down cabin. Well, Tuggle for one wasn't thinking of death. Tuggle was courting; and Tuggle had said that he aimed to get married. Tuggle was foreman on the place. He bossed all the negroes, made them step about, and he took what he wanted wherever he found it. Everyone had to serve him. . . . Tuggle had told Cotton Dolly that he would be back to-day for his witch-wine, and it better be ready. Cotton Dolly had known what that meant. Tuggle carried a rawhide whip that stung like an adder, and he would lay it across the back of a mule or a stubborn woman. Besides, if the wine wasn't ready, he wouldn't give her the rations he brought from the plantation store: meal, flour, salt-pork, coffee, and sugar. Witch-button wine was Tuggle's pay for letting Cotton Dolly live and draw plantation rations. Tuggle had to have witch-wine. He was helpless without it. Without it he couldn't boss, he couldn't fight. He couldn't make love to a woman.

Cotton Dolly in her split-bottomed rocker stirred and fanned at the flies. Odors rose from the scorching fields, took shape, and shimmered. The sun was white. It was time for Tug to be coming. Well, she had nothing to fear. His witch-wine was ready. Old Cotton Dolly felt shame, disgust, because something down in her throat thickened, as if she were choking. In her time she had been high-and-mighty. But that was before Tuggle humbled her pride, and put her away in the brambles. On the plantation there is always an old black woman who takes care of the plantation babies while their mothers are out in the fields. Such an old woman is called a Cotton Dolly. Right here on this same plantation Cotton Dolly had been Cotton Dolly for twenty years, looked-up-to, respected. Everyone knew her, she had known everybody. She had lived in a nice house then up at the Quarters and, of a morning, the

mothers had brought her their babies: black ones, brown ones, banana-colored. She wasn't so old; she would have been good for years to come. But when Tug was made foreman he changed things around. He had said Cotton Dolly was too feeble to look after the babies. He must get a new Cotton Dolly.

A good Cotton Dolly is hard to find. To begin with she must be old. Not too old. Just old enough. Old enough to have wisdom, strength, shrewdness, tolerance, pity. She must have religion, yet she must be versed in voodoo, in the ways of plat-eyes and witches: a good Cotton Dolly stands in with God and the devil. She must know how to croon. . . . Cotton Dolly had been Cotton Dolly for twenty years, and then Tuggle had got another woman from a plantation down the river, and had put her away in this tumbled-down cabin.

At first the other negroes came to see her, to say howdy and tell her the news; to tell her how the new woman looked; to recount what she used for nosebleed, ground-itch, and rickets. Old Cotton Dolly would sit and listen, one hand over the other. But it was hard to get to Cotton Dolly's cabin. You had to cross the branch. You had to go through the swamp, or around through the woods. And then there was Tuggle, always a-talking. Tuggle had talked so much mouth, back and forth, that he got all the people uneasy. You take an old woman, a crone, dabbling in this and that. You never can tell what will happen. It was easy enough, as the months passed, to think of Cotton Dolly as a conjure-woman, who would "spell" you if you meddled her. Best not to go near her.

At first to Cotton Dolly, accustomed to the seething life of the Quarters, the silence was like a blanket that came down and choked her. She would sit and think of the past, of how different life would be for her if God had seen fit to give her a child of her own. Now, in her old age, she would have someone to love, to look out for her. She even thought of Tug as a son. Tug would never have been so bad, with a good Christian mother to raise him. Tug got started wrong, long ago when he was a baby. . . . Cotton Dolly had tried to make the best of things, here in the cabin. She had cleared out a little garden patch, and she raised a few collards and butter-beans, some turnips and onions; and her wine-making helped her to fill up the days. Then, too, from time to time she got hold of something to mother: first a lame rabbit, a wounded bird, then one day a little stray kitten. She would sit and croon to the kitten. The kitten had stayed with her and had got to be a cat. But one day she had found him dead and lying out in the field.

After the cat died Cotton Dolly would sit and croon to herself or talk to the trees and the flowers; to God and to Jesus, to Peter and Paul; to anything that would listen. Sometimes, if the wind was right, she could hear a train, faint and far away down the river. It always made her sad. Folks coming and going, going and coming. Best to stay in one place.

Cotton Dolly, in her split-bottomed rocker, fanned at the flies. It was very still. Even the birds were motionless sitting about in the trees, each bird to itself. Suddenly, sitting there, although she had heard nothing, Cotton Dolly knew that something was hiding out in the thickets. The weeds crowded about the doorway, and the jimpson-bells hung limp in the heat, their strength gone in thick dry odors. But beyond the weeds and the jimpson-bells a clump of sunflowers blazed, their petals spread, giving the hot sky stare for stare. And there among them something was hiding, some creature in pain.

Cotton Dolly hobbled down the steps to the gate. She leaned on the gate and peered through the weeds. "Whut dat out da' in de bramble?" But nothing answered her. There was not a sound in the thickets. She started to lift the wire hoop off the gate, but as she put out her hand she saw Tuggle almost upon

her. She felt sick and dizzy, and the cords beat in her throat. She watched him slouching along, his hat pulled low on his forehead. Tuggle never came through the field the same way twice. Tuggle was sly. It wouldn't do to make a path through the weeds and the cotton. He skulked through the field sidewise, glancing behind him. He looked surlish for a man who was courting, and down-at-the-mouth, and his black skin was ashy. Tuggle was drinking too much of this witch-wine.

Cotton Dolly opened the gate. Cotton Dolly was old, and one hip hunched out more than the other from toting her babies. But she was always well-mannered and she kept herself tidy. The kerchief, knotted about her neck Cotton-Dolly fashion, was clean and snowy; and under her patched calico skirt her petticoat was trimmed with lace. She used to be fixy when she was young, a nice-looking woman. She bowed to Tug, gave him howdy, but Tug only grunted and scowled. He slid the tow-sack of rations down on the porch, and his red eyes shifted. "Whut you got out da' in de bramble?"

Cotton Dolly looked at him, put one hand over the other. "Ah ain't got nuthin' out da' in de bramble." Tug was tall and heavy-built, but his head set too short on his shoulders. He never wore work-clothes. He dressed like a white man, pants and a shirt and yellow shoes. . . . The handle of Tug's whip fell to the floor, and the lash trailed on the steps like a snake.

Cotton Dolly went into the lean-to and brought out the witch-button wine. Tug uncorked it and took a long drink. His throat went up and down, and his big hands quivered. He took another drink, and still another. But Tug looked poorly, for true. There was a dull, glassy sheen to his eyes, and his skin was the color of ashes. A black man's skin ought to shine. It's due to look glossy. Tug reached for the jug, took another long drink. His short neck thickened, and a slow stain crept up in his cheeks. The wine was beginning to work on him, get into his blood. Cotton Dolly looked at him with pity, compassion.

Tug smacked his lips. "Umm-mmm. Gawd-a-mighty!" He put the wine down. "Well, Cotton Dolly, ah gwi' be ma'ied next week, one week fum to-morrow. Dat de night ah aims to git ma'ied. An' ah be back one week fum to-morrow, along about noon. Ah'll need anudder jug den, plum full o' wine. Be sho' you has it ready. Ready an' waitin'."

Cotton Dolly was glad it was all fixed up, that Tug's girl was going to have him. Maybe Tug would settle down now and mend his ways. Marrying is like getting religion: you got to repent, be born again. She spoke out, one hand over the other. "Ah's glad to hear you say dat, son. Ebry man ought to marry. But you looks bad, Tug, an' po'ly—fo' a man whut aims to git ma'ied. Hit dat witch-wine, honey. Witch-wine is pizen. You done got yo' blood used to pizen, same as a snake. But some day de wine gwi' re'ch yo' heart—"

The whip in Tug's hand cracked, and coiled about the old woman's body. She sank to her knees, groaning. The witch-wine had got into Tuggle's eyes, into his hands. He was crazy, Tug was a devil. He called her names, bad words that beat at her ears. "Hab mussy," she moaned. "Hab mussy, Jedus!" . . . Suddenly there was a noise in the brambles. What could it be? Tug scowled, his red eyes furtive. He raised his whip. But silence held the fields again, the yupon and blackberry thickets. The black man scowled; he looked reckless. "Dis here place is ha'nted," he said. He picked up the jug of wine and strode away through the cotton. Cotton Dolly watched him go. The witch-wine gave him swagger, assurance; and as he went his whip lashed and cut at the weeds and wild-cotton blossoms.

She lay there a long, long time where Tug had left her, her flesh all a-quiver; and then, quite suddenly, she heard again that strange sound out in the

thickets. She sat up, rubbing her swelling arms where the whip had lashed them. Something was hiding out there in the brambles, something in pain. She could see it now—moving and crawling through the bushes, like a bouquet of flowers: red and blue, and purple and gold. It looked like a woman. . . . Yes, Lord, the thing was a woman, a young yellow girl.

The girl staggered in through the gate. She fairly fell at the old woman's feet. She was in a bad way. Well, no one but a girl in shame would find her way to Cotton Dolly's cabin. Cotton Dolly helped her into the house and put her to bed. She took off all her grand silk clothes, and over the girl's head she slipped one of her own clean nightgowns. She made a fire and drew some water from the well in the yard, and put it on in the kettle to boil. It had been many a day since she had helped to birth a baby. She used to be handy at it; it was part of her calling. But she hadn't birthed a baby since Tug put her away in the brambles. She felt useful again, needed. It was like old times. Now and then she went to the bed where the girl lay, her body heavy, her hair thick on the pillow.

Cotton Dolly knew her kind, her stripe of people. They didn't live on this plantation, they lived down the river. The girl was a "mud-mulatto." This meant she was partly Indian, but nigger too. Cotton Dolly had no respect for people who mixed up their blood. It was sinful, the Lord didn't like it. You can always look for trouble with mud-mulattoes. They give themselves airs. . . . Well, it was lucky the girl had come when she did. By the time Tug returned for his witch-wine Cotton Dolly must have her up and sent back to her folks. It would never do for him to come and find her there in the cabin.

The sun was low now, and in the thickets and cotton patches wood-doves were calling. It was getting late; but the girl was strong and broad of hip. She ought to be through with this business by moonrise. Cotton Dolly went to an old black trunk behind her bed and got out two leather straps. These she tied to the foot of the bed, and she put the ends in the girl's clenched hands. But the girl fought the straps on her wrists. She was having a bad time. Well, a shame girl always has a bad time birthing a baby. Then maybe she won't be so rash about getting herself into trouble. The girl let out scream after scream. She was crazy with pain. . . . And then of a sudden her screams stopped. She lay very still. Her eyes were closed, she was limp and cold. Her bright clothes lay about on the floor, on the chairs by the bed. Cotton Dolly shivered and looked over her shoulder. A wind came up through the cracks in the floor, chilling her feet.

Who dat done slip in de house
In a long black robe, wid silver shoes? . . .
Don' look at me, Deat',
Look de udder way.

Suddenly, as Cotton Dolly bent over the bed, she stiffened, outraged, indignant. She drew herself up, put one hand over the other. There was bad business here, the work of the devil. This girl had tried to kill her child, her unborn baby.

The night dropped out of the sky, out of the crowding trees, the thickets and bushes, and a young moon came in through the window. Cotton Dolly heaped fresh wood on the fire. It was hot, but she had to have light. Plenty of light. More light than the moon could give her. . . . She set to work, sweat on her face, in the palms of her hands. She must do all she could to birth this child and outwit the devil. Sometimes sleep came upon her, pulled at her till she staggered. But she fought against it, flung it out of her eyes, away from her body. If she slept, Death would get busy. Sometimes she prayed, staring out at the stars. Stars always play a part in birthing a baby, ever since God placed one above a manger. Some-

times she mumbled spells to charm off the devil. . . . God must help, but the devil too. He must undo what he had done.

Once she remembered the witch-wine. She always saved a little for herself whenever she made it, and hid it away in a bottle. Witch-wine is handy to have around; a dose helps the swimming-in-the-head and wards off the fever. She went into the lean-to and got it, and she forced it between the girl's clenched teeth. If witch-wine can make a coward fight, it can birth a baby . . . and bring life back when life is going. The wine where it stained the bedclothes was like bright drops of blood.

Toward morning, but when it was still good dark, the baby was born. Cotton Dolly worked with it, tossed it up and down, blew the breath of her own life into its nostrils. Against the wall in the firelight her shadow, huge and fitful, climbed and dropped and climbed again. Her arms swung wide. . . . But when at last the baby cried, Cotton Dolly threw her apron over her eyes. "T'ank Gawd! T'ank Gawd!" It was a little boy, fine and plump, well put together; and as she touched the quickened, new-born flesh an ecstasy seized her. She left him there on the bed and, rocking and swaying, she went to the door and flung it wide. She must give Death a chance to slink away, in shame and in sorrow.

Who dat sneak out o' de house
In silver shoes?
Go on away fum here, Deat',
Ah ain't got nuthin' fur you,
Not dis time—
You mus' come back again.

Cotton Dolly wrapped the child in her best Star-of-Bethlehem quilt. Then she took him nearer the fire and sat down in a rocker. . . . A man-child, without blemish. She peered at the baby. No, Jesus! the child had a birthmark. On his thigh was a birthmark shaped like a moon —a little white crescent. It stood out against the soft dark skin. Cotton Dolly touched it, caressed it with one knotty finger. Her heart thumped, turned over; and a longing came upon her, took thought, grew into a prayer: "Lawd, dis is a marked chile. He needs care an' raisin'."

Everybody knows that a marked child is different. A marked child is born for trouble unless you raise him careful. You must teach a marked child manners, beholdedness. At the birth of a marked baby two paths stretch before him. One leads to God, the other straight to the devil.

The baby cried, and Cotton Dolly hushed him. Even now, God and the devil were striving within him, each for possession. Whose child would he be?

Cotton Dolly took the child and, holding him in her arms, she went to the door of the cabin. The moon was going now, leaving wisps and shreds of itself in the trees, in the dim cotton thickets. A bat wavered and flew in the cotton. Cotton Dolly watched the bat: would it fly to the right, or the left? A tree-toad called. Would it call yet again?

For a long time, aching and dizzy, she stood looking out of the doorway. Then she turned and went back to the bed. She stood looking down at the half-dead girl, the child in her arms. The firelight was red on the girl's face, on her spent, sullen body. Her clothes hung about on the chairs, all over the floor. Cotton Dolly looked at her. "Dis chile aint yo' chile," she mumbled. "You didn' gib buth to dis baby. Ah did . . . in sorrow an' trouble. Ah did mo' den you did to bo'n him. You kilt him, but ah gib him life again. Dis baby is mines."

Unfaltering, but with movements slow, unhurried, Cotton Dolly took the baby and went out of the door of the cabin. She went into the fields. It was good day now, and the red sun lifted over the swamp. On the branch at the edge of the swamp was a small cotton-house, and in it the old woman put the baby wrapped in the quilt. It was a nice place, cool and fragrant, and covered with leaves. No one ever came there in summer.

When she returned to the cabin, empty-armed, she got a spade from the lean-to, and in the earth under the fig tree she fashioned a mound two feet long, heaping it up in the middle. She faced the mound toward the rising sun, and edged it neatly with stones and bits of old broken glass. At its head she placed a bottle and filled it with flowers. Then she went indoors and looked at the girl. The girl was coming to, beginning to throw out her hands; the blood beat up in her yellow cheeks. Cotton Dolly looked at her. "Deat' been come in dis house," she said, "in a long black robe wid silver shoes." She spoke in a low, flat, even voice, one hand over the other. "Deat' come, an' she tuk yo' baby, yo' lil son. Ah done bury 'im under de fig tree."

She swayed a little, fell into a chair. She was worn out, tortured for sleep. She slept and the girl slept. She felt nothing. . . . By and by she awakened. It was noontime and blazing hot. She got up and put some cool green leaves on the girl's forehead. Then she went out of the door into the fields. The baby was sleeping too, in the Bethlehem quilt.

The girl slept for two days. She lay buried in sleep, her body spent, her hair thick on the pillow. Cotton Dolly had her hands full. First she took a piece of charred wood and with it drew eight straight marks on the door of the lean-to, one for each day until Tuggle's return. Every morning Cotton Dolly went into the lean-to and crossed out one of the marks on the door: eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two. She had to keep track of the time. Then in the afternoon she went into the swamp and hunted for the feverish clusters of witch-buttons that go into witch-button wine.

And every day—twice, thrice, whenever she could—Cotton Dolly stole away to look after the baby.

It had got along fine. Already, it seemed to her, it was fleshening out, beginning to look pert and knowing. His fist would close over her finger, and old, old songs came back to her, and old, old knowledge. How to make a sugar-tit: you take a small square of muslin and you fill it with sugar creamed with milk, and fresh, sweet, country butter; then you tie it the shape of a baby's mouth. . . . Cotton Dolly had gone across the branch one day and had borrowed a goat from a farmer, to milk for the baby. She had told the farmer her blood was thin, she had to have milk. The goat had had a little kid, and the poor nanny cried for the kid all the way back to the cabin.

That was the first sound that the girl heard when, on the third day, she turned over in bed and awoke from her sleeping. The girl lay spent and heavy, her face sullen; and she called Cotton Dolly. "Whut dat, Cotton Dolly? Whut dat sobbin' an' cryin' an' takin' on?"

Cotton Dolly told her. "Dat? Dat's a goat."

"Whut you wants wid a goat, Cotton Dolly?"

Cotton Dolly told her that a goat is good company when you're alone. She put one hand over the other. "Hit ain't nobody's business, gal, ef ah wants to pleasure myse'f wid a goat."

Old Cotton Dolly had to wait on the girl hand and foot. The girl was high-tempered and fault-finding, too. She would lie in the bed and complain. She came from a fine brass bed, she said, and vittles like white folks. She couldn't eat out of a tin pan and drink out of a bucket. Cotton Dolly did all she could to make things nice. She even went into her trunk and got out the treasures she had saved to be put in her coffin: a blue china vase splashed with roses, a pin-tray to match it, a cup and saucer that Cotton Dolly said once had New Orleans written on it in gold letters, but they had rubbed off now, the thing was so old. But no matter what she did the girl didn't like it. She would laugh, loud and scornful, or she would lie and complain. She said that the goat tethered out in the yard drove her crazy. It sobbed and bleated all night long. She would call

Cotton Dolly. "Ah can't sleep, Cotton Dolly."

"Uh-huh."

"Ah can't close mah eye."

"No, Jedus."

"Hit dat goat. Dat goat drive me crazy."

Cotton Dolly would drag herself up from her pallet, and she would sit and stroke the girl's forehead. But always when she did this she couldn't help crooning; and this too drove the girl crazy. "Shet yo' mouf, Cotton Dolly. You wuss'n dat goat."

Then Cotton Dolly would say, one hand over the other, "Is you want to know how-come dat goat cry an' take-on in de night? Well, den, ah'll tell you. Dat goat was tuk away fum 'e chile, dat how-come 'e cry. Dat goat got mo' heart den you is."

Bella had never mentioned her child, nor why she had come there. She never even looked at the grave, under the fig tree. . . . Well, girls nowadays took children light,—too light, Jesus! The girl said her name was Mary. But Cotton Dolly told her that Mary was too sweet a name, too soft-spoke, for such as she was. So Cotton Dolly called her Bella, short for Jezebel.

Bella was tricky, too, and sly. Let Cotton Dolly turn her back, and the girl would be up and out of bed, poking around in the cabin. One day when Cotton Dolly thought her asleep, she slipped out to see to the baby. The evening was mild. Blackbirds and robins streamed toward the swamp and the thick piny woods, and a squirrel barked up in a treetop. Cotton Dolly fed the baby, gave him his bottle of goat's milk. He was not like his mother. He was dark, a rich brown. His eyes would be dark too, like chinquapins. Cotton Dolly spoke to the wild things that lurked in the bushes. "Don' you meddles dis chile. You keeps wha' you b'longs, wid de devil. Dis chile is de Lawd's. Gawd takes keer o' dis baby, same as He did lil' Moses."

When she returned to the cabin she found Bella out in the lean-to. She was counting the marks on the lean-to door: eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two. "Whut is dese marks, Cotton Dolly? Whut is dey fur?"

Cotton Dolly told her: five crosses and three straight marks. That meant just three days till Tuggle, the plantation foreman, came back for his witch-wine. "Tug aims to git ma'ied," Cotton Dolly explained, "an' he wants de wine fo' his weddin'. Dey'll be big-doin's up at de Quarters, one week fum to-morrow." The girl ran her thick finger over the marks, and traced all the crosses. And Cotton Dolly puffed out her lips. "Ah gwi' sen' you back to yo' folks, den, in t'ree mo' days. Tug'll whup you, an' he'll whup me too, ef he finds you here in de cabin."

She took Bella to the door and showed her the witch-wine where it simmered in the wash-pot under the fig tree. Every day, down in the swamp, she had gathered the feverish clusters on their slim silver stems—frost and fire, fire and frost—and had set them out in the lean-to to "make." Then she had boiled and had simmered. The witch-wine was almost ready now. Above the pot the witch-fumes were purple and gold. They curled above the little grave that Cotton Dolly had fashioned. But Bella had no eyes for the grave. It looked pretty, too, edged in pebbles and colored glass. Bella had Indian blood in her veins; she was cold and heartless. Cotton Dolly looked at her, filled with sorrow and pity. But Bella suddenly broke into laughter, into loud, scornful laughter. It made the flesh creep on the old woman's bones. Bella laughed and swayed this way and that, her breasts hanging heavy. "Ah ain't skeered o' no mans," she said, "whut gits his strengt' out o' witch-wine."

Her words frightened Cotton Dolly. . . . Bella had secrets in her eyes, in her voice, in her very hands.

The next morning Cotton Dolly went into the lean-to and crossed out another mark on the door, and the day after

that still another. Just one mark left. That meant that to-morrow Tug would be coming. Her hands trembled, a cord beat thick in her throat. Well, she had nothing to fear. She would get up bright and early, and send Bella away. And the witch-wine was ready and waiting. Cotton Dolly had strained it into a jug, and had set it away in the lean-to, high on a shelf. She sought comfort in thoughts of the baby. When Bella was gone she could keep the baby right here with her in the cabin. She would make him a cradle out of a box. Of course there was Tug. But on the days that Tug came for his wine she could hide the baby away again, down by the swamp. Seven days out of the week, and the child would be hers. She would raise him careful. She would teach him to walk before the Lord and to fear the devil.

That night Bella called her, shook her awake. "Gawd-a-mighty, Cotton Dolly, is you deef in yo' y'ear? Ah can't sleep fo' dat goat, dat onery goat."

Cotton Dolly grunted. "Uh-huh. Ah hears you, Jedus."

"Hit dat goat. Dat goat drive me crazy."

The goat sobbed and bleated; and Bella complained and tossed on her bed. By and by Cotton Dolly heard her get up and go to the door of the cabin. The girl took the broom just inside the door and threw it as far as she could at the goat in the garden. Cotton Dolly heard it hit the fig tree, and fall through the leaves. She heard the goat break through the bushes. The old woman sat up on her pallet. It's bad luck to throw a broomstick out in a garden: the witch-hags'll get it. . . . She got up and went to the door of the cabin. The moon was broad and full now, and white on the weeds and the brambles, on the little mound under the fig tree. And across the mound lay the broomstick that Bella had thrown, straight across it. Cotton Dolly shivered. Her teeth rattled and shook. A broomstick lying across a grave! No wonder the frightened goat had broken away in the bushes. Cotton Dolly got the broom and put it back in the cabin. She would have to go and look for the goat the very first thing in the morning.

She lay down again on her pallet. But now *she* couldn't sleep. She listened to Bella's breathing. It was slow and easy. Once out in the moonlight a bull bat fell and rose with his long thin cry, "Swoop—Swoop—*Spade!*" When a bull bat goes like that he is digging a grave. It is bad luck to hear a bull bat out in the cotton.

Cotton Dolly was up betimes, before it was daylight. She put on her clothes and went into the fields. She had plenty to do. But first she must look for the goat. As she searched in the fields she watched the sun, watched it climb into the sky. She must hurry. She must hurry back to the cabin and send Bella away, so Tug wouldn't come there and find her. At last she saw the goat, with its rope caught in some bushes. She took hold of the rope and led the goat back to the cabin.

Cotton Dolly found Bella up and already dressed. Cotton Dolly had washed her clothes and the girl's long yellow stockings, and Bella looked fine all dressed up in them, and prideful and haughty. She had primped herself, too; she had rubbed snake-oil on her hair to make it look slick and shiny. On her mouth was a twisted, secret smile, and her eyes, too, were full of secrets. She said she was ready to go. But Cotton Dolly looked at her with pity, compassion. Cotton Dolly was low in her mind. In some dim way she was troubled. Maybe she hadn't been patient enough, forbearing enough with Bella. She had been so busy; there was so much to do. And she wasn't used to excitement now, to going and coming. She went out and stood under the fig tree, by the little grave she had fashioned. She looked up at the sun, at the shadows. Maybe she ought to talk to Bella, try to give her some manners and raising.

"Bella," Cotton Dolly said, "you don'

want to talk o' de fruit o' yo' sin, no, Jedus. But hit's da' jes' de same. You done been down in de valley, honey. You mus' try now an' git some religion."

But her words were like rain on a duck's back. Bella stood on the steps of the cabin, eager to go. She laughed, loud and scornful. Her yellow cheeks were flushed, her eyes very bright. "Look here, Cotton Dolly," Bella said, "no one know wha' ah been, but jes' you an' me. Wha' ah been is mah secret, an' yo's. An' you keeps yo' mouf shet, Cotton Dolly."

Cotton Dolly was shocked, offended at such wanton words. Nowadays girls were too uppish, they took life too light. She put one hand over the other. "De Lawd knows wha' you been," she said. "Hit's Gawd's secret too." She pointed to the little grave. Somehow, in some strange way, the grave had grown very real to her, as if something—she didn't know what—had really died and now slept there. Every day she had put fresh flowers at its head and had kept it free of the leaves that fell from the fig tree. "Bella," she said, "Bella. De Lawd knows ebryt'ing, gal. You better mind some day de Lawd don' sen' yo' chile back to ha'nt you."

But Bella was swishing down the steps, out the gate through the cotton. Cotton Dolly looked after her. Once, looking after her, she raised her hands palms outward in a sort of benediction.

It was nearly noon, and blazing hot. But Cotton Dolly sat in the sun, her flesh shaking as if with a chill. Something had happened: Tug's wine was gone, stolen out of the lean-to. She had looked for it everywhere. She had gone deep-down in her old black trunk. She had torn things up in the cabin. But the wine was gone. And now Tug would come and he'd kill her. He wanted that wine for his wedding.

Her thoughts, confused and frightened, went after Bella. Bella must have taken the wine—who else knew about it? She thought of Bella's unsteady laughter, her flushed cheeks, the glaze in her eyes. How could Bella have treated her so. She had nursed Bella, taken her in! She had scared death away from her side. And now Bella had stolen Tug's witch-wine. Cotton Dolly mumbled and cried. "Please, Jedus. Have mussy, Jedus." . . . Then, of a sudden, her moaning ceased. She sat huddled over. How could God hear her? God never listens to sinners. Bella had taken her witch-wine, yes. But what had *she* done? She had taken Bella's baby. No use to put it off on God, to say God had told her to do it. That bat that had wavered and flown in the night; that tree-toad a-calling—what were they but the devil's own? She had looked only for signs from the devil. And not one had she asked of the Lord.

Cotton Dolly turned her eyes to the little mound under the fig tree. Her flesh shivered. She had stolen, and then lied about it. And she had fashioned her lie out of God's good earth, and had decked it in pebbles and flowers. No wonder the Lord wouldn't hear her. She had hindered the Lord, run before Him.

She got up and with her flat bare feet she tramped on the grave, tramped it with frenzied flat bare feet till the grave was flat and bare. And she scattered the pebbles and colored glass, and all the fresh field flowers. Yes, Lord, she had mocked and shamed at death; and now death was mocking at her. That bull bat had known; he had dug her a grave in the moonlight. . . . Death?—her eyes filled with new fright. Her arms grew limp and fell to her sides, and great sobs shook the old woman's body. She sank to her knees where the grave had been. If Tug killed her, what would become of the baby down there by the swamp? Every day death looked at the child with a thousand eyes. Every day down there by the swamp death hungered for him . . . hungered and thirsted for his flesh, for his sinless flesh.

Cotton Dolly pulled at her throat. She felt weak, she could scarcely move. But she mustn't think of herself now.

She must go and get the baby, and some way, somehow, get him up to the Quarters. She must hurry, too. She rose and stumbled headlong into the fields.

Cotton Dolly took the child and held him close in her arms. She tried to think, to look ahead. She would go across the field and then through the pine woods. She tried to run, and her bare feet tripped in the weeds. . . . But as Cotton Dolly ran through the weeds, suddenly, out of the blazing day, she heard laughter, a girl's wild laughter. She stopped in her tracks. It was Bella laughing. She laughed, and the fields and the swamp took it up. It was Bella, back at the cabin, and Bella was drunk. Cotton Dolly knew now: Bella had hidden herself in the cotton, and had drunk Tug's witch-button wine. She turned about. Maybe Bella would give her the witch-wine. She began to run toward the cabin, the child in her arms. "Jedus," Cotton Dolly prayed. "Lawd, ah done hindered you, run befo' you. Ah's ol' an' frail. Now, ah lays hit all in yo' hands, Lawd. Show me de way."

She could see Bella now at the gate of the cabin. Bella drunk and all dressed up in glory. She stood there, her back to the cabin, and in one hand she held the wine, the bottle of witch-button wine. The wine streamed from the mouth of the jug to the ground. Cotton Dolly, with the child in her arms, stood on the steps of the cabin. "Bella!" she called. "Bella—" But the words died in her throat. The blood left her head, thickened down in her heart.

Tug. Was that Tug out there in the weeds—standing out there in the cotton? He stood a few feet away, staring at Bella. And Bella was shouting and laughing at him, her loud, scornful laughter. "Tug!" Bella called. "Ah hears tell dis is yo' weddin' day. Ah hears you is aim to git ma'ied!"

Cotton Dolly saw Tug grope for the whip in his belt. But something ailed Tug. He was sick. His eyes stared at Bella, stared through her at something beyond, at something beyond Cotton Dolly. And Tug was fighting something, something she couldn't see. He wrenched at his clothes, at the front of his shirt, his face gray and ashy. He lurched, and the whip fell out of his hand.

Cotton Dolly's arms tightened about the child. She had forgotten the child. She tried to speak, but her tongue was stiff. As if from a long, long way she heard the baby crying, a thin, piteous wailing. Bella heard it too, and her laughter stopped, the jug fell out of her hand. And she turned, just as Tug fell in the cotton. Bella stared at Cotton Dolly, at the child in her arms; stared at his fat black legs, at his thigh with the birthmark on it.

"Bella," Cotton Dolly said. "Bella—"

But Bella's eyes were white, and her mouth, stained with the witch-wine, trembled and shook. Cotton Dolly saw her eyes turn and search under the fig tree, search for the grave that was gone, for the scattered pebbles and flowers. The girl began to back out of the gate. She stumbled over Tug's body . . . stumbled and fled through the field. The old woman stood and looked after her till she was lost in the cotton.

Then she went slowly down the steps, through the weeds to the gate. With her toe she touched Tug's whip where it lay on the ground. It lay there, dead like a snake.

Who dat done come in a long black robe,
Wid silver shoes? . . .

Cotton Dolly stared at Tug where he lay in the weeds. "Fo' Gawd," she said, "hab mussy, Jedus!" Tug had slashed and had torn at his clothes; he had torn them away from his body. . . . And on Tug's thigh was a birthmark, a little white crescent.

Cotton Dolly took the baby and sat down on the steps of the cabin. She was tired, she was faint and dizzy. But the baby was almost asleep now, in her black hungry arms.

She began to croon; softly, not to wake him.

MICE AND MEN

BY JULIAN HUXLEY

EARLY this year the newspapers contained accounts of the havoc being wrought in California by field mice. These little creatures, increasing beyond all ordinary bounds, had forced themselves by sheer quantity upon the notice of man. In ordinary seasons they levy a modest toll on the fruits of the earth, wild and cultivated—a toll scarcely noticed by the farmer, still less by the community at large. In this year and region, however, they had become a grave menace to agriculture, and the resources of the state were being mobilized against them.

A similar plague occurred on the other side of the Atlantic in 1892–93. In Scotland during that season vast hordes of field mice ravaged the farms and again became such a serious pest that they were deemed worthy of a Government investigation. In this Scotch plague the mouse mainly responsible was the short-tailed field mouse, or vole, *Microtus hirtus*. But other field mice were abnormally abundant at the same time, such as the long-tailed field mouse and the bank-vole. This would indicate at the outset that some general conditions in the season were responsible for the sudden abundance, and not any specific conditions favoring one kind of mouse only.

These plagues are accompanied by great gatherings of birds which prey upon the mice. In 1892 large numbers of kestrels and still larger numbers of short-eared owls assembled at the feast, though by what means they received intelligence of it is a mystery. So great was the supply of food that the owls prolonged their breeding season right into November, and even then produced broods much larger than the normal.

In a mouse plague which occurred in Nevada in 1907 three-quarters of the alfalfa acreage of the state was destroyed. The whole ground, for square mile after square mile, was riddled with mouse-holes till it was like a sieve. It was estimated that the several thousand mouse-eating birds and mammals busily gorging on mice in the affected district were killing over a million mice a month; and yet the numbers of the mice continued to increase in spite of this toll.

Why these sudden outbursts of generative energy on the part of rodents? That is a problem for animal ecology, the branch of biology which might be called scientific natural history—the study of animals in nature and their relations with their environment and with other animals and plants. The first thing the ecologist discovers is that the plagues are not such isolated phenomena as at first sight might appear. They are merely exaggerations of one part of a regular cycle. All small rodents (not at present to go beyond this group) appear to have the life of the species strung on a curve of numerical ups and downs, a cycle of alternating abundance and scarcity. Field mice in England, for instance, have their ups every three or four years. There was a moderate degree of abundance in 1922, and again in 1926.

The best-known of all such cases of cyclical abundance, however, is the lemming of Scandinavia, which has become almost mythical. In the sixteenth

century, this animal was reported "by reliable men of great probity" to fall down from the sky in huge numbers during storms of rain. The truth is not much less remarkable. The European lemming live on the mountains in southern Scandinavia (and, farther north, at sea-level on the treeless tundra). Every few years they become enormously abundant in their mountain homes, and set off upon a strange migration. They move off in all directions downhill from the mountains, crossing roads and rivers and railways on their march. If they reach the seacoast they start to swim out to sea, and swim until they drown. After a lemming march the beach will be strewn with lemming corpses. But it is not only drowning and the accidents of the route which kill off the little creatures. Epidemics always seem to break out in years of abundance and slaughter thousands. The animals which migrate are almost exclusively young animals. The old ones stay at home, on their breeding-grounds; but there they too may succumb to the spread of the epidemic. These years of over-population occur with considerable regularity, and not only with regularity, but with the same rhythm as that which characterizes the rhythm of abundance in British field mice. The average length of the cycle in both kinds of animals is close to three and a half years.

But the lemming introduces us to another fact of very great interest. Lemmings occur not only in Europe but also in Greenland and Canada. Here too there are years of abundance and of dearth, and the cycle appears to be the same or nearly so in both continents. Causes are at work which are simultaneously influencing the little ratlike animals on the Barren Grounds of Canada and in the mountains of southern Norway.

Before going farther in our analysis it will be well to remind ourselves that many other kinds of animals show the same sort of cyclical rise and fall in numbers. This present year is of interest to English ornithologists because it has witnessed a considerable irruption into England of that remarkable bird, the crossbill, with its mandibles crossed over each other for the purpose of feeding upon pine cones. These irruptions come westward from the pine forests of central Europe, and occur at more or less regular intervals. One, in the sixteenth century, brought prodigious numbers of the birds, which did great damage, since they discovered that their beaks were admirably adapted for slicing apples in half as well as for obtaining the seeds from pine cones. The dates of crossbill irruptions, however, have not been so well recorded as those of two other kinds of birds, the Siberian nutcracker and the sand grouse. The nutcracker is an inhabitant of the vast coniferous forests of Siberia. It has invaded western Europe at intervals of eleven years, with what would be extreme regularity if it were not for the fact that now and again one of the invasions is "skipped." Although observations on the spot in Siberia are not forthcoming, it appears almost certain that the migrations are due to over-population in the bird's natural home, coupled with a bad harvest of the pine cones upon which they feed. Doubtless, when the failure of the pine crop is less extreme than usual, the pressure on population is not so great, and the wave of migration spends itself before reaching Europe.

Pallas' sand grouse, on the other hand, is a bird of the steppes and deserts of central Asia, where it lives upon the scanty vegetation of the salty soil. In every so many years the bird leaves its home in huge flocks, migrating both eastward into China, and westward into Europe, even as far as the British Isles. Here again, a cycle of eleven years is pretty closely adhered to, with the additional fact that the alternate migrations are much bigger. As the records go, we seem safe in prophesying another large invasion about 1930. The cause of the emigration again seems to be relative

over-population, or what comes to the same thing, food-shortage, owing to their food-plants being covered by snow or heavy frosts.

The periodic migrations of locust and cricket swarms, literally eating up the country in their advance, are well known. Unfortunately a proper analysis of them has not yet been made. This is partly due to the fact that the direction of insect-migration is entirely at the mercy of the wind, and that a periodic increase of locusts in one spot will cause emigration to various different countries according to the accident of wind-direction. In addition, insects, with their lack of a constant temperature, are more likely than birds and mammals to show the effects of short periods of very exceptional weather, less likely to sum up, so to speak, the effect of moderate and irregular but long-continued change. However, there seems little doubt that investigation will reveal, in these and other insects, such as the cockchafer, periodic cycles of abundance similar to those found in birds and rodents.

However, the most remarkable facts on the problem of periodic fluctuations in animal numbers are provided by the books of the Hudson's Bay Company. This great trading concern has kept records of the number of skins of all the various kinds of fur-bearing animals brought in each year by its trappers. The records show cycles of abundance and scarcity in muskrat, Canadian rabbit or varying hare, skunk, fisher, mink, wolverene, marten, lynx, red fox, and arctic fox. The most spectacular changes, perhaps, are to be noted with the Canadian rabbit (*Lepus americanus*). One year these animals will be enormously abundant over vast areas of the continent. Next year an epidemic will set in, and in the succeeding season a rabbit will be a great rarity.

But more remarkable even than the change in abundance is the regularity of the cycle. The Hudson's Bay record goes back to 1825. The record for annual number of lynx skins, for example, when plotted as a graph, has the regularity of a temperature chart. At about every eleven years comes a peak, where the number of skins brought in averages about 50,000—always over 30,000, and sometimes 70,000. Halfway between these peaks are depressions, in which the average number of skins sinks to well below 5,000, occasionally approaching zero. If records were available from single areas, the ups and downs would be even more marked, for the maxima and the sudden drops are not synchronous over the whole continent, although they do not vary in any one locality more than two or three seasons each way from the mean for the whole continent.

Both lynx and rabbit have a cycle of just over eleven years in length. The lynx eats the rabbit; and, accordingly, the lynx's maxima are one to two years later than the rabbit's.

Not merely are there more rabbits in existence at a period of maximum abundance, but they are reproducing faster. In bad years there will be only one brood in a season, and about three young in a brood; in very favorable years there will be two or three broods, and eight or ten young in each brood. The Indian trappers are said to prophesy the prospects of next season's rabbit crop by counting the number of embryos in this season's rabbits. The same sort of thing occurs in field mice in England, as has just been established by Mr. C. S. Elton at Oxford; though the number of young per brood is not increased in favorable years, and the number of months in the year during which no breeding animals are to be found diminishes.

When the different records for all kinds of animals and birds from all over the temperate regions are analyzed, it turns out that in most cases the average length of the cycle of abundance is either just over eleven years, or else one-third of this, namely about 3.7 years. But of course a periodically fluctuating curve of abundance might be due to two separate cycles, interacting with each other.

By mathematical analysis, however, when such is the case, the two components can be separated from each other. When such analysis is applied to the Hudson's Bay records, it is found that in fact the curves for the numbers of many animals are thus compound. Sometimes a curve which clearly has maxima every eleven years will be revealed as possessing in addition a minor rhythm of about 3½ years. This, for example, is the case with the red fox. On the other hand, the more northern arctic fox has an obvious period of about 3½ years; but when this is eliminated from the curve, lo and behold a minor, but none the less definite, eleven-year cycle remains. Is there any virtue in this period of eleven years? Every astronomer would at once exclaim "sun-spots"; for the number of sun-spots visible on the sun's disc shows a well-marked fluctuation, and this cycle, too, has a period of just over eleven years. This cycle does, in fact, correspond with that of number in various animals, the sun-spot minima about coinciding with the animals' maxima. What is more, the sun-spots do not always keep strictly to their eleven-year period, but may anticipate or delay matters by a year or so: and when this is so, the animals' curve of abundance is usually found correspondingly shifted.

II

There is little doubt that spots on the sun have an effect upon weather on the earth. They cause great magnetic storms; and, in addition, the amount of energy radiated by the sun appears to be greater at sun-spot maxima, less when sun-spots are few. One of the chief facts of terrestrial climate which seems to be definitely correlated with sun-spot number concerns the track of storms. If the tracks followed by heavy storms are plotted on a map, it will be found that, in North America for instance, there is in any one year a zone along which the majority of storms travel. Now this zone shifts up and down with considerable regularity from year to year, returning to the same position about every eleven years. Such a shift in the storm tracks will obviously mean a slight shift of the margins of all the great climatic zones. It will mean that there will be cycles of rainfall, some areas getting more than the average every eleven years, while other zones in the same years will be getting less than the average; and this, according to the careful investigations of O. T. Walker, is what actually occurs. Such changes are likely to have the most noticeable effect upon plants and animals where conditions are difficult for life. For instance, a small change in rainfall in a semi-desert region will have much more effect than the same change in a well-watered country; and quite small temperature changes in the Arctic will have disproportionately large effects on the animals and plants which live there.

The three and one-half year period, on the other hand, has not so far been correlated with any meteorological facts. This, however, need not surprise us. What the meteorologist records are variations in single factors of climate such as temperature, rainfall, sunshine, and sometimes humidity. It is by no means likely that any one of these by itself is going to be the main factor responsible for the abundance or scarcity of a plant or animal. It is much more likely that what favors the growth of an organism beyond normal will be a particular combination of, say, temperature, moisture, and sunshine, probably no single one of the factors at work being either at its maximum or its minimum. Something of the sort can often be traced with life. For instance, the optimum geographical zone for white men is one of moderate temperature, moderate rainfall, moderate sunshine, and a good deal of changeable weather: no extremes are involved in it.

The sun-spots, by altering storm tracks, and probably in other ways as well, undoubtedly affect the weather. This will affect the growth of plants,

this the growth of small herbivorous animals, and this in its turn the abundance of the carnivorous animals which prey upon the herbivores.

The abundance of rodents is thus an indicator for certain *combinations* of meteorological factors. The meteorologists themselves have not yet invented any instrument for recording these particular combinations of factors—indeed, they would not have suspected their existence but for the facts unearthed by the biologist. The lemming or the field mouse or the Canadian rabbit is thus, from one point of view, a sensitive meteorological instrument for integrating and summating a number of different agencies which affect the weather, and transmuting a particular combination of them into an increase of numbers which catches the eye of observant man.

That important biological and meteorological effects are exerted by sun-spot cycles is rendered certain by corroborative evidence from other quarters. Professors Huntington and Douglass have examined the growth of the big trees (Sequoias) of California, as recorded in the thickness of their annual rings of wood. This biological record goes back over three thousand years; and in it they find a quite definite eleven-year cycle corresponding perfectly with the cycle in sun-spot numbers. Besides this, changes in the mean level of various large lakes, notably Victoria Nyanza, have been analyzed and, as Brooks has shown, here too a correlation is apparent between rise and fall of water-level and increase and decrease of sun-spot number. It may be noted that lake-level will not be dependent on any single one of the factors usually measured by meteorologists, but will represent a balance between precipitation and evaporation, which latter in its turn will depend partly on temperature and partly on humidity. The lake thus integrates a number of weather components, as does an organism.

In passing, it should be observed that the short-period cycles, of three and one-half years, would be expected to affect only small animals which reach maturity in a year or less. Larger animals have lives which are too long to be upset by such small cycles. In precisely the same way, the choppy little waves which are so unpleasant to the inmates of a rowboat have no effect upon the bulk of a liner. Even the eleven-year cycles will have little effect upon animals like deer or wild asses. There are indications of fluctuations, however, in the larger herbivores, but these are of much longer range, a fact which in itself makes it more difficult to collect statistics on the subject.

It is of great interest to find that the beaver, almost alone among the smaller fur-bearing mammals of Canada, shows no periodicity in its numbers. This fact is doubtless to be correlated with its remarkable mode of life. It lives, not on short-lived herbs or grass, but on the bark of trees. It constructs dams by which it regulates its water supply; and brings tree trunks from considerable distances to serve as food stores. When the local supply of trees is exhausted it migrates elsewhere. Since it lives in small, isolated colonies it does not suffer from widespread epidemics. Here we seem to have a good proof that the fluctuations in numbers which affect other animals are not due to mysterious cyclical fluctuations in the animal's inherent reproductive capacities, but to a normal though indirect action of climatic influences *via* the animal's food, its parasitic enemies, and so forth.

A great deal has been heard recently of this theory of inherent or spontaneous changes in reproductive capacity, apropos of the fall in the human birthrate which has been so noticeable during the last half-century among most civilized peoples; and the upholders of this view attempt to support their conclusions concerning man by referring to the cycles obtaining in mice and lemmings. Far from lending them support, however, the biological facts tell in the opposite

direction. We know of no single case of an animal changing its reproductive capacity, whether number of broods per year, or number of young per brood, so long as it is kept under really uniform conditions, while we know of a great many cases in which improved conditions of temperature, food, etc., do bring about an increase in reproductive output.

As Sir William Beveridge has ably pointed out, there is nothing in the fall of the human birthrate which cannot be accounted for by increased prudence coupled with increased practicability of contraceptive devices; nor is there anything, even in the most destructive plague of voles or rabbits, followed by the most spectacular disappearance of the marauders, which cannot be accounted for by causes simpler and more familiar than an otherwise unknown fluctuation in reproductive potency. Once conditions such as food begin to favor a small herbivorous mammal, the shortness of its life-span enables it to outrun the constable of its carnivorous enemies, which are handicapped through being of larger size, and so requiring longer to complete each generation. However, as the density of herbivore population increases, parasites will be able to spread more rapidly from one individual to another. Finally a density is reached at which some disease germ can pass from mouse to mouse with great rapidity, with the result that a fulminating outbreak of disease occurs. This violent outbreak of epidemic disease has been reproduced experimentally with mice. The same bacillus, the same mice: but with one density of mouse population there are only isolated cases of disease, while with five times the density of population a devastating epidemic breaks out. The same appears to be true for animals kept under semi-artificial conditions for sporting purposes. For instance, the Commission appointed to investigate grouse disease in Britain came to the conclusion that the mere fact of overstocking a moor would cause disease, by permitting a normally innocuous coccidian parasite to pass so rapidly and in such numbers from bird to bird that mass-infection and consequent disease resulted.

It appears to be a constant rule that the rapid increase consequent on outrunning larger, carnivorous enemies always has as consequence the running into new conditions more favorable to the invisible parasitic enemies of the species. As a result, an epidemic follows, and the numbers of the species are reduced below normal. This reduction may then be carried still farther by unfavorable seasons.

This has one interesting consequence of general biological interest. The evolutionist normally assumes that the pressure of natural selection will be approximately equal, in natural conditions, over long periods of time. This may be so for animals like the beaver; but it will clearly not hold for those like lemmings or field mice. In these, after a period of minimum numbers has been well passed, and the animal is filling the empty landscape once more under increasingly favorable conditions, natural selection will clearly be much less intense than normal, for there will be next to no competition due to population pressure, and weather and food conditions will be more favorable than normal. The shoe will pinch unusually hard twice in each cycle — once when weather and food conditions are most unfavorable, and once when the inevitable epidemic breaks out. Thus, as Elton puts it, the animals will be subjected in each cycle to two severe examinations of different type, while they will be hardly troubled by schoolmistress Nature during the rest of the time.

But when violent epidemics come, disease resistance will indeed be at a premium, since only one in a thousand or even one in a hundred thousand will survive, and from those scattered survivors the whole species will be reproduced. That is natural selection with a vengeance.

III

Important consequences of another type flow from the facts. If lemmings and rabbits and mice are killed off in thousands by epidemics, may not rodent cycles bear some relation to human disease? The answer is not only that they may, but that they do. Most people know now that bubonic plague is spread to man from rats and other small rodents like gerbils by means of the animals' fleas. The years when the small rodents in central Asia or south Africa show maxima in numbers the incidence of human plague increases.

After lemming migrations, visitations of disease are not uncommon among the human populations of the Norwegian valleys. The matter has not yet been properly investigated; but it is at least possible that some bacillus, acquiring new virulence by its rapid passage through its rodent victims, may produce this human disease. Hardly any work has been done on the causes of these natural epidemics of animals. The whole question would well repay investigation, both on account of its intrinsic interest, and because of its possible bearings on human health.

Immediate practical questions arise as to the means of coping with the periodic pests as they arise. All kinds of paradoxes here present themselves. The obvious course, and that naturally enough demanded by the suffering agriculturist, is the wholesale destruction of the voles or mice which are taking toll of his crops. Destruction, however, is often no easy matter. It is difficult to get at such small creatures which live in holes, swarm in myriads, and in a few weeks' time are grown up and ready to reproduce their kind. Both trapping and poison have their drawbacks and defects. Furthermore, killing the animals once they are so abundant that they are easy to kill is like locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen.

The bird-protectionist sees one step farther. He reminds us that owls and many hawks prey upon small rodents, and would have us keep down the mice and voles by encouraging the predatory birds. But then steps in the ecologist and points out that both human destruction and avian enemies will have as their effect merely the slowing down of the geometrical increase of the mice (for certainly not even the dense hordes of owls and kestrels in 1892 served actually to decrease the numbers of the voles, and man's methods have hitherto proved a good deal less efficient than nature's); and all that this can be expected to do is to delay the outbreak of the epidemic which alone can reduce the creatures to manageable numbers. The ecologist, on the contrary, would prefer to try some method which would actually encourage the multiplication of the rodents in the hope that the epidemic would come sooner, the agony would not be so prolonged, and the losses to agriculture consequently not so great. As alternatives he would suggest the effect of various bacterial cultures, which might provoke an artificial epidemic at an earlier stage of the cycle; or possibly some biological treatment such as that proposed by Rodier for rats, of trapping, killing all the females captured, but releasing all the males, in the hopes that the minority of females would be pestered out of successful breeding.

Common sense, however, may rightly ask one or two questions of the ecologist. It seems, for instance, to be a fact that epidemics set in among mice in all years of maximum abundance, whether the over-population becomes so intense as to constitute a real plague, or is so moderate as to be noticeable only by the professional naturalist on the lookout for such phenomena. How is it that the epidemic does not break out in the plague years as soon as the population intensity attained at the ordinary maximum has been reached? Clearly some other factor must come in—possibly a time factor, or, what comes to much the same thing, one involving the number of gen-

erations run through by one or all of the parasites of the rodent.

What is clear, however, is that no quite simple, straightforward methods will serve. The biological thinking of the man in the street—and of the professional biologist, too, for that matter—is much too much obsessed by military metaphor for him to be able yet to see quite straight on ecological problems. He is brought up to believe in a struggle for existence, which he envisages as a regular battle between an inoffensive herbivore and its enemies, or a sort of athletic competition between a carnivore and its prey. In both cases he thinks of the struggle as something in which victory is to be achieved, as in war or sport. As a matter of fact, it is nothing of the kind. A herbivorous animal without carnivorous enemies would tend to overpopulate its territory, to be diseased and under-nourished, even to condemn itself to starvation by eating down its own food-supply; a carnivorous species which was restricted to one kind of prey, and a kind which it could too easily catch, would inevitably bring its own race to extinction by eating itself out of hearth and home. Both eventualities have, through the interference of man, been realized. When red deer were introduced into New Zealand they throve on the succulent forest and bush, and multiplied exceedingly owing to the absence of all carnivorous enemies. But after a few decades they had changed the face of the country where they were abundant, and to-day the fine heads and heavy beasts are found only on the outskirts of the deer's range, where it is still advancing into virgin country. Elsewhere the herds are full of stunted specimens and malformed antlers, and the authorities have been forced to play the part of natural enemy, and to adopt a rigorous policy of periodic thinning-out to save the stock.

As an example of the opposite effect, I may quote from Elton's *Animal Ecology* the curious case of Berlenga Island, off the coast of Portugal. "This place supports a lighthouse and a lighthouse-keeper, who was in the habit of growing vegetables on the island, but was plagued by rabbits which had been introduced at some time or other. He also had the idea of introducing cats to cope with the situation—which they did so effectively that they ultimately ate up every single rabbit on the island. Having succeeded in this, the cats starved to death, since there were no other edible animals on the island."

IV

We are often told that it is very important for children to select their parents wisely. It is becoming clear that a wise choice of enemies is an asset to an organism! One can hardly, perhaps, speak of an animal's enemies as part of its adaptations; but at least they are vital to its survival. The fact is, of course, that in almost every case the word "enemy" is only applicable when we are thinking in terms of individuals: as soon as we think of the species, the individual "enemy" usually turns out to be a racial benefactor.

The two things needful at this stage are patience and research. Patience is needed in face of the popular outcry and demand for immediate action which is raised every time a plague of mice or a dearth of fish is experienced. And research is needed to unravel the excessively complicated threads of the web of life by which one organism is linked up with others and with all its environment.

The fluctuation in the number of sunspots is probably connected with the distance of the great planet Jupiter from the sun's incandescent surface. The sun-spot fluctuations change the tracks of storms, brim and depress the waters of our lakes, alter our weather. The weather-changes make the giant trees put on more or less wood, promote the multiplication of rabbits, mice, and lemmings, cause an alternation of fat and lean years in the fur department of the

Hudson's Bay Company, inflict periodic losses, through vole plagues, upon the world's agriculture. The multiplication of the rodents, besides reverberating upon fox and lynx, hawks and owls, affects our human health returns. Verily the dreams of astrology, even if they suffered from the defect of not being true, had at least the merit of simplicity in comparison with this web of cosmic influence spinning out from one corner of the solar system to another!

But the very complexity of what we do know, or can reasonably surmise, bids us take an infinity of pains to unearth the still greater complexities that are still hidden from us, if we are to control nature efficiently. Modern agriculture, with its massing of huge numbers of individuals of one species of plant or animal, is a deliberate invitation to parasites and pests to revel in the unaccustomed profusion. And when we come to tropical agriculture, we must remember that the tropical heat raises the insect to be the equal in activity of the warm-blooded mammal, including our own species. The mechanical and chemical triumphs of the last hundred years must give place in this century to biological triumphs of equal magnitude if man is to retain his dominant position on the earth.

Until synthetic chemistry has progressed a great deal farther, the control of the plant kingdom is man's only means of supplying himself with the bulk of the food and the raw materials which he needs. The success of this control, as more and more of the earth's surface is given over to such vegetable exploitation, will come to depend more and more upon detailed knowledge about the animal and plant enemies, actual or potential, of the crops. We talk a great deal about safeguarding the food supply of the country in time of war. In fifty years' time we are much more likely to be talking about safeguarding the world's food supply in time of peace. And we shall not be looking to machinery for our safeguards, nor even to light cruisers, or other forms of naval strength, but to the laboratories of entomology, mycology, and all the other branches of pure and applied ecology.

HOT COPY

A STORY

BY M. C. BLACKMAN

THERE never was another person, I guess, who hated newspapers and reporters like this author chap, Arthur M. Dodd. I wish I could get that guy off my mind.

If he saw me again, he would not know me from Adam's off ox, but he has been quite an influence in my life, and I may turn out to be a famous writer on account of him. He was the cause, in a way, of me becoming a newspaper reporter, and now he has started me practicing to be an author.

I'd just as soon he never got any closer acquainted with me, because if he knew all there is to know, he might get real nasty.

It was last week I met him in a speakeasy. Not that I am a boozer, but every man has to have a little drink now and then to steady him up. When I went in Dodd was sitting humped down in a chair and, in spite of the way he looked, I remembered him from that time up-state when I got to be a reporter.

I cannot express it how that man looked. It gave me a feeling, and I am used to things. His face was as white as this piece of paper, except for a ragged set of whiskers; and his clothes looked like nothing to make a tailor proud. But it was his eyes that got me. Fishy, they were, but more like two agate marbles in a pile of sand. He did not look up, but just sat there like a lump.

Feeling kind of creepy, I ordered a shot of whisky straight, when I had meant to have only a highball. After I gulped it down I stood there thinking about how this Dodd had changed. Three years ago he was as fine a looking chap as they grow in this neck of the woods. Everybody was predicting what a wonderful future he had before him. He worked his way through college, with some help from a widowed mother, and had got quite a rep as a writer. I never could go his stuff, it was so queer; but the critics called him one of the Younger Philosophers, whatever that stands for.

But you could see he was a wreck now. Booze got him, and they say he is a dope, too. He hardly ever writes any more and spends what coin he has for liquor and dope. He spends a lot of his time in Chicago, hanging around taxi stands. I know why, and I might tell him a thing or two, but it is not any of my business.

Mike, the bartender, started kidding me about a story we had in the *Star* that day, and I was giving him the low down, when Dodd sat up in his chair and glared at us.

"Newspapers!" he said, almost choking. "Buzzards!"

That was a queer thing to say, but he did not say anything else. He sank back in his chair, and I noticed he looked at the liquor I had in my glass, with his mouth working. I figured he was short of coin and needing a drink. I saw he did not know me.

"Drink up, brother," I told him. "What will you have?"

"Thanks," he said, and shuffled up to the bar, ordering a shot. He could

hardly wait for the bartender to set it on the counter, he was so eager. But he never drank that shot.

"What you said about newspapers," I began. "Now I am a newspaperman myself—"

Say, I have had people to look at me without any love in their eyes before. A fellow with my job has to get used to it. But this Dodd looked at me as though I had suddenly broke out with a filthy disease. I never saw anything so unfriendly in my life. I could guess why, but he ought to know that some things are like that.

"Scum!" he said, and what does the nut do next but pour that glass of good whisky in the cuspidor.

Well, I never argue with gin-heads when they have been drinking, and it is no use getting insulted at things they say. They ain't right.

"Oh, if that is the way you feel about it, all right with me," I said. "It will probably do you more good in the cuspidor anyway."

But the poor prune could not stand it without a drink any longer. He came back to the bar and parked by me.

"I say, my friend," he remarked. "I am not quite myself to-day. If you will just forget what I said and renew your offer of a drink I will be obliged."

So I bought him another drink, and we got to talking. He was willing to talk as long as I bought the drinks, and I kept Mike pretty busy awhile. I saw he was sore on newspapers, so I dropped that and started talking about being an author.

I asked him if he thought I could learn to write short stories, and he said sure, it would be easy for a man with intelligence like me. Of course, I knew he was soaping me for the drinks, but still I am no nitwit.

I asked him how to go about it, and he said it would be best to get a good book on short-story writing and learn what he called the "mechanics" of writing, and then just write about everyday things that happened around me. That crack about "mechanics" gave me pause, as they say, because it sounded like work, and I always thought people who wanted to be authors just sat down and dashed off a couple of hot yarns and sent them off.

Anyway, I set up once more for Dodd and left him there looking more than ever like a last year's bird nest. I decided I would take his advice and try the thing out. While I have not got anything to say against newspaper work, because it is high class, still, I figure a man with brains ought to get into the magazine game where the big money is.

First, I have got to get used to writing. I am a street man and I 'phone in all my stuff to the fellows on the desk, and they set it down, put in the commas and all the "alleges" so it will read smooth and still be safe. It is my story, of course, but working that way I do not get much practice at writing. I expect my grammar is not as pure as the editors like, but I can learn that easy.

I am writing this for practice and another reason. I expect that as soon as a man becomes a famous author the editors and the public are going to want to know something about him. So while I am practicing I am going to set down a few facts about my life, and when my history is needed it will be all ready. What I say will be the truth, and what I leave out will be nobody's business.

The less said about my early life the better, but there are a few things I want to mention before somebody else does. It is a cinch that denials in print are about as useless as arguments with traffic cops. They do no good. When I am on a story, I always say, "Now listen here, friend; say what you've got to say *first*. Deny charges before they are made, or in the same edition, anyway." And it usually works.

So nobody is going to put it over on Henry Jasper Brown—that's me—by digging up some past history of mine and giving *their* version of it. I got nothing to be ashamed of, but I know my newspapers.

I was born in Leavenworth, Kansas. Most people think that is only a prison, but it is a town also, and people live there. When I was born my old man was inside the walls. Maw was living outside, waiting for Dad to get out. He never did. He died in there when I was twelve years old, and he had three years to go. It was just as well he kicked off, because he died with Maw thinking he was a fine man and believing he got a dirty deal. I'm wise, and I know she would have learned different if he had got out. It seems he was doing right well selling gold bricks to farmers and then he switched over to peddling dope. The federals got him. But what is the use of going into details about that? It was just one of those things, as they say.

Maw laid the leather on me and made me go to school until I got too big to handle, and I skipped out. Don't think I threw her down, because I did not. I believe every man ought to keep at least one of the ten commandments, and I picked out the one about honoring thy father and mother. I could not do much by the old man, but I always honored Maw. I sent her money when I had it and letters when I didn't. Now she has got a snug little cottage in Leavenworth and plenty of time to tinker with the radio, which she is bugs about. I go to see her every year or two.

Skipping over the next few years after I left home, in which nothing criminal or interesting happened to me, we come to this city, which is what I did.

I arrived here about the same time as a high-powered newspaper editor from New York, but I did not know then how important that was. My only interest in newspapers was in the "Male Help Wanted" columns. But even I noticed the change that came over the smallest of the two afternoon papers.

I mean it was very noticeable. It seems that the *Star* was bought by a company that owns a string of papers all over the country, all of them snappy, readable sheets. And how that little *Star* began to twinkle. It blossomed forth with three-inch streamers in red ink on pink paper, and more pictures than a family album. That New York editor, Mr. Morton, sure knew his headlines. A few weeks later I heard about his orders to the staff.

"Boil it down," he said, "and make it snappy. Then throw it away and fill the hole with pictures. Any fool can look at pictures, and our readers are fools."

Fools or not, they bought the *Star*. The circulation jumped from a few thousand to six figures, and believe me, the opposition was sick! It still is, but it tries to be scornful now. But it is hard to laugh off a rival circulation of two-three hundred thousand. The *Telegram* is so old it creaks, and as dignified as your maiden aunt. The editor still thinks a newspaper should be read and not seen!

Mr. Morton hired almost as many cameramen as he had reporters, which was plenty. The snappers were all smart fellows, most of them from New York, and they knew their photos. Mr. Morton fitted out two trucks like regular studios, so the snappers could print their pictures on the way back to the office, and the speed they showed was a marvel. Editions every couple of hours and all of them hot.

I got a job driving one of the studio trucks. It was easy because I had been a taxi driver once.

It was like getting paid for having fun. That was three years ago when I thought eighteen dollars a week was good money. I got interested in the newspaper business the first week, and it did not take me long to get the hang of it, which is more than I can say for some of the old *Star* reporters, who pretty soon found themselves looking for jobs. But as I may have mentioned before, I am no dumb Isaac, and I could see that a picture of the pretty girl who saw the robbery was more important than a snap of the homely clerk who was robbed. That is first-reader stuff. I learned a lot from the snappers, too.

The third week I worked, there was a queer story broke in Wego, a small burg in an upstate county. The correspondent sent in a small item about plumbers finding the skeletons of two human bodies buried under the basement of the cottage of Mrs. Emmaline Dodd. That was all, just three-four lines.

Most editors would have passed that by, but not Mr. Morton. He had not been here but a couple of months, but he clicked right away on that name Dodd. He knew that anything connected with the Dodd family was good copy, on account of the son of the family, the son being this same young writer chap, Arthur M. Dodd, which I met last week in the speakeasy. Mr. Morton hopped right on the story, figuring two skeletons in the basement was almost as good as one in the closet.

I saw that item in the paper and was interested because I had heard of the little burg, Wego, once before. Buck Hodges, a taxi driver I knew in Chicago, had a little skirt on his string, and she said she was from Wego.

Her name was Sylvia Laverne, and she wanted to be an actress until Buck came along. She was a cute little trick, with a funny little dimple in her left cheek, but she was too young. I told Buck he ought to pick them a little older and he finally got wise and chucked her.

Mr. Morton sent a reporter, a snapper, and me up there to Wego. He picked me to drive the truck because the snapper told him I was always a lot of help, and I guess I was. It is a good thing he sent me, as things turned out. The reporter was named Anthony Watkins and he was one of those kind I call lily-handed. He was always dreaming and he did not seem to know what everything was all about. The only reason they kept him, I guess, was that he was really fluent on the typewriter, and they sent him up to Wego because they figured there probably would be a whole lot to write about nothing much. But I did not care for him.

Dick Burch was the photo expert and he was a good egg. He and I went up in the truck, which was only a two-hour drive, and Watkins followed on the train. We got there first and had time to look around a bit before the train got in.

We did not need much time to see all there was in Wego, which is like a million other towns that tourists try to dodge when they think of stopping for the night. One street (which was just a rough spot in the highway), a few stores, a few more houses, a big barn that passed as a hotel, the railroad station—and that is the picture of Wego. A half mile away was the lake, and by it the Dodd cottage. We drove by it for a once-over, and it almost made me homesick. It looked a lot like Maw's place, with vines and flowers and a garden.

There was nobody at home. Arthur Dodd had been abroad nearly three years studying and writing, and he had made enough money to send his mother to California. His sister had gone there already to try to break into the movies and had drowned there, it seemed, just six months before all this happened. Her mother had been with her in Los Angeles several months before she got drowned. The old man had been dead for years, so there was only Arthur and his mother left. Arthur was having the cottage fixed up before Mrs. Dodd came back.

We got back to the station just as the train came in, causing great excitement among the natives as usual. Watkins got off and so did a man from the *Telegram*. One man, mind you. But there was a third passenger for Wego, which added to the excitement, because it was the first time in ten years three people had got off there at one time. At least that is what I heard a guy say.

But my eyes popped when I saw that third man. He was Arthur M. Dodd himself. I knew him because it was only a week before that the *Star* carried a four-column picture of him, announcing his engagement to a swell New York society girl, who he fell in love with abroad.

And there was this dumb Watkins had been on the same train with him two hours and never got wise. You could not expect anything better of a *Telegram* man, but a *Star* man ought to be awake. I grabbed Watkins and whispered the tip. He looked kind of funny and excited.

"Are you sure?" he asked me.

"Hell's bells!" I said. "Ask him questions, not me."

From the way this Watkins looked at Dodd you would have thought he was looking at a god. I had heard him say he thought Dodd was a wonderful writer, but I did not think he actually worshipped the man, even if he did make lots of jack with his writing. They hardly mentioned the skeletons, and I was disgusted. Instead, Dodd talked about his mother and how wonderful she had been to him. He also told how much he loved his sister, Mary Lou, and how shocked he had been when his mother cabled him about her being drowned. Mrs. Dodd would not let him come home, he said, because the body had never been found, and there was no use. Dodd seemed to take to Watkins, though I could not see why.

Well, Dick got busy, anyway, and while the *Telegram* man was still arguing with the half-dead hotel clerk, Dick and I were on our way back to the city with pictures of Dodd, the cottage with X marking the entrance to the basement, and a general view of Wego.

We had a layout in the final edition with a line:

YOUNG WRITER VIEWS GHASTLY FIND

There was some art work and a drawing of Dodd staring at two skeletons. The sketch of him looked more like a traveling salesman with the heebie jeebies than anything else, but the skeletons were plenty lifelike, if you get what I mean.

The pictures were fine, but there was not much to the story. It told about Dodd's return, and about finding the skeletons, one adult and one baby. Dodd was quoted as saying the cottage had not been occupied for nearly a year and that neither he or his mother had any idea how the things got under the basement.

It wasn't much, but it stirred up interest in the case, and hot news was scarce. When Dick and I got back to Wego next day we found one of the Chicago papers had sent up a man and a photographer, and it began to look as if things might turn out interesting after all.

The probe of the skeleton case, as we say in the headlines, was being carried on by the county coroner and the prosecutor. So far they had learned that two bodies, one adult and one baby, had been found under the basement of the Dodd cottage by plumbers. Which was pretty good for them.

But being prodded by the reporters, the coroner crashed through with the statement that one of the skeletons was of a woman and the other of a very young infant. He also opined that they could not have been there more than two years, and gave a long explanation about the nature of the soil and something or other causing the flesh to decay quick. Not very sweet copy, but Watkins dressed it up pretty well, and we beat the *Telegram* on story and pictures. I decided Watkins might be half human after all.

I was a little disappointed over what the coroner said about the woman and the baby being dead at least two years, because I had been wondering if there could be any connection between the large skeleton and Mary Lou Dodd. It was just one of those wild hunches. But the Doc seemed to know his bones. It began to look as though a country dame and her baby had been bumped off and buried under the Dodd cottage while they were away, though why the murderer should pick that spot with the lake and miles of woods close at hand was more than I could figure out. And every female in Wego was well accounted for.

I did not see where a new lead for the story next day was coming from. Wat-

kins did not seem to care, but settled down in the hotel lobby with a pencil and some paper. Probably he was writing poetry or figuring his expense account, or doing some other imaginative work. Some people are funny.

But I am a man of action, and I went out to stir around. I spent a pretty busy afternoon pottering around the Dodd place and talking to people, and then Dick and I went back to the city.

Next day I sort of casually suggested to the prosecutor when nobody else was around that it might be a good idea to look around the place for a weapon or something that might have caused death. He said he had not thought of that.

We could not shake off the other reporters, so the whole gang of us went down to the Dodd house and searched all over it, Arthur Dodd helping and chatting with Watkins. Then we went outside and looked around, but did not find any blunt instruments or anything else that looked dangerous.

Before we left I sort of accidentally kicked at a flower pot near the outside basement entrance. It broke and when the dirt fell apart there was a small bottle in it. It was empty, but it had a poison label on it.

Everybody got excited except Watkins, and he looked at the bottle two or three times and then just looked bored. The prosecutor made an official statement about the find, the snappers took pictures, and the reporters sent in some more real news. All except Watkins. Honestly that bozo got my goat.

"What's the matter with you?" I asked him. "Ain't you going to 'phone about this?"

"No," he said.

"Are you crazy?" I snapped. "Why in blazes are you passing up the only news you got to-day?"

"Because," he said, "I didn't like the looks of a brand new poison label on a two-year-old bottle, if it was that old. That stuff was planted."

Well, he had me there. I clean overlooked the new label feature when I fixed it up. Yes, I might as well admit it was my job. Why not? It did no harm. Nobody else noticed my bust, but this Watkins is like that. But he thought it was the Chicago man did it.

However, I was determined the *Star* was not going to miss out on it after all my trouble, so I sneaked away and did some telephoning on my own. We had the story all right, but Watkins saw a late edition and he thought it had been rewritten from the other papers. He did not like it, but he liked even less what he got an hour or so later. Mr. Morton telephoned him. I figured it would be too good to miss, so I slipped over to the clerk's desk and picked up the receiver of an extension 'phone.

"Why didn't you send in something on that poison bottle?" the boss asked.

Watkins explained he was sure it had been planted, and gave his reasons.

"Now, listen to me, young man," Mr. Morton said. "You were sent up there to find news, not to kill it. And when the prosecutor makes a statement, it is news. Understand?"

Watkins came away from the telephone looking like he had smelled a bad tomato. I had to laugh.

Dodd told the coroner and the prosecutor next day that his mother was coming home and he asked them if they could not finish with the case before she got in, because he was afraid it might upset her worse than she was. But the poison bottle kept the thing alive and they were still looking for "clues" when Mrs. Dodd arrived in Wego from California.

I clipped all the stories about that case, and I will copy the piece Watkins wrote about Mrs. Dodd, because it just goes to show how wrong some reporters can be. Also because that story got me started to doing some investigation of my own. He wrote:

> It is almost impossible to think of horrible things in connection with Mrs. Emmaline Dodd, who arrived here to-day after a year in California, for a reunion with her son, Arthur M. Dodd, well-known young writer, whom she

had not seen since he went abroad nearly three years ago.

Two things marred their otherwise complete happiness in the meeting. One was the official investigation into the finding of two human skeletons beneath the tiny, vine-covered cottage where Mrs. Dodd lived happily for so many years and reared her two children to manhood and womanhood after a bitter struggle with poverty while they were mere babies.

The other shadow was their grief over the death of the daughter and sister, Mary Lou Dodd, who was drowned in California six months ago. Mrs. Dodd's sorrow has weighed heavily upon her, judging from her appearance to-day. She is a frail little woman, with dark, appealing eyes and the look of one who has suffered much and borne it well.

One marvels that she ever survived the struggles that must have been hers when she was left alone with two young children after the death of her husband eighteen years ago. With no resources other than the tiny home and her own capable fingers, she sewed for the villagers, tended a garden, and managed somehow to make ends meet. It is no wonder that Arthur Dodd is passionately devoted to her.

She has always been completely wrapped up in her two children, for whom she worked so many years. The sudden death of her daughter shattered half of her world. It was doubly hard, at a time when she was beginning to find real happiness in the success of her son.

Mrs. Dodd was so overcome with grief that she has never been able to furnish many details of the tragedy. For some reason, the California papers made no mention of the drowning, which occurred at a little-known beach resort, and the story did not reach this section of the country until the cablegram was received in Paris by Arthur.

There is a story that Mary Lou Dodd ran away from home a few years ago, fired with schoolgirl ambitions to go on the stage. Her mother, with understanding sympathy, persuaded her to return. Then, when she became convinced that the girl would never be content in Wego, she consented to her going to California to stay with a friend and seek a trial in motion pictures. She had little success in the already over-crowded field of filmdom, but it is understood that she was happily employed in a library at the time of her death.

Mrs. Dodd was too shocked by the gruesome discovery under her home to discuss it with reporters, and her son asked that she be excused from an interview.

Most of that is a lot of hooey, but it shows how Watkins was plumb sold on the Dodd family. Besides, there were two items that interested me a whole lot, and gave me a powerful hunch. One was that thing about Mary Lou Dodd running away from home, and the other was the reminder that Mrs. Dodd had been away from home only one year. And the coroner had said those bodies had been buried at least two years! I hadn't thought of it before, and neither had anybody else, but it looked as if Mrs. Dodd was living right there in the cottage when that woman and baby were buried.

Dick and I went back to Wego the day Mrs. Dodd arrived, instead of staying all night in the city like we had been doing. It was Saturday night, and I decided to talk to some of the natives. I went into the barber shop and risked my life getting a shave. Business was dull, so I sat around awhile talking to the barber, and to pep him up I gave him a few pulls at a bottle of bootleg I happened to have with me.

With a few slugs of liquor under his belt, how that barber did talk. He wasted enough language on me to last him six Saturdays in a city shop. Finally, I got him to talking about Mary Lou Dodd, and it was not long before he crashed through with a remark that nearly knocked my eye out.

"What was that?" I asked him, sitting up straight.

The barber grinned at me like something evil and then blinked like an owl.

"I say I got my own ideas about Mary Lou going away to California to join the movies," he said. "I think it was something different. After she came back from Chicago, where she run away, her Maw kept her pretty close at home. But I was down by the lake one day and I saw her. She looked like if she wasn't married, she ought to of been. Only I never heard tell of a husband. Pretty soon after that she went to California."

"How do you know she went to California?" I shot at him.

The barber looked puzzled.

"Why everybody knew it," he said. "Ain't she been gone these two years? Didn't she drown down there?"

"I know, but did anybody see her leave town? I mean, on a train or in a car?"

"Why, no; I don't reckon as there was anybody as did see her leave. Mrs. Dodd just told the postmaster her daughter had gone to California, and he spread it around. Why, do you mean—?"

But I had left him quick. I beat it back to the hotel and found Watkins sitting there in the lobby, reading a book of short stories by this Arthur M. Dodd. I guess he never got such a surprise from a truck driver in his life before.

"Listen, Watkins, that woman's skeleton they found was Mary Lou Dodd," I said. "And the baby was hers," I added for good measure.

"Nonsense," he snapped, looking hard at me and sniffing. "Are you drunk?"

"Never was more sober or serious in my life," I came back at him. "And I'll bet a week's pay I got the right hunch."

"Why don't you read the papers?" he asked me. "Mary Lou Dodd was drowned in California."

"Who said so? The body was never found, and Mrs. Dodd put out the only dope the newspapers ever had."

"Besides, Mary Lou was never married, so the baby could not have been hers," was the next crack of this dumb reporter.

"Don't be silly. Pharaoh's daughter was never married either, but she found little Moses in the bulrushes," I said. I used to go to Sunday School back in Leavenworth and got many a laugh out of it.

Then I told him the barber's story, and how nobody ever saw Mary Lou leave Wego, and when I got through pointing out this and that, Watkins was beginning to take notice. He also looked kind of sick, and I guess he was thinking about that plap he wrote about Mrs. Dodd.

"And it looks to me," I ended, "like Mary Lou and her baby were murdered, and I would not need two guesses to pick out the old lady as the guilty party. She probably thought she was doing it for her daughter's own good. Let's go get the prosecutor and the coroner and get busy while the opposition sleeps upstairs."

Watkins was still not as anxious as he might have been, but he came along. We dragged the officials out of bed and they did not growl much. It took a lot of talking, with me doing the most of it, to convince them; but finally they saw the light. They were all for action.

"Now, lemme see," said the prosecutor, "they may be awake yet at the cottage. Let's go there and talk to Mrs. Dodd some."

"Come along, young man," the coroner said to me. "I don't remember seeing you around here before, but you seem to know a lot about this thing."

Arthur Dodd, still dressed, came to the door and asked us to come in. I noticed he looked worried. The prosecutor asked to see his mother.

"My mother is confined to her bed," said Dodd. "She has had a nervous breakdown. Can I be of service to you?"

"Well, I dunno," said the prosecutor, who was a soft-hearted gink for a man of his calling. "This is important, mighty important. Could you come down to my office with me a little while?"

Dodd looked puzzled, but he came along. I thought they ought to have left somebody to guard the house, but I did not like to say so in front of Dodd. So we all went back to the prosecutor's temporary office over the drugstore.

"Arthur," said the prosecutor in a kind voice, "we have got reason to believe that one of those skeletons found

under your house was your sister, Mary Lou, and it looks pretty bad."

Dodd jumped out of his chair and turned pale as a ghost.

"That is absurd," he shouted. "My sister was drowned only six months ago in California."

Well, the prosecutor talked on for about an hour, and asked questions. And say, he was not so dumb as he looked, either. Dodd kept getting more and more nervous and worried, pacing back and forth and messing up his hair. Finally, the prosecutor said gentlelike that he guessed he would have to arrest Mrs. Dodd for murder.

"No! No!" Dodd begged. "Wait! I will tell you the whole story, just as my mother told it to me to-day. It would kill her if she were arrested and the story got out. But I will tell you, and I am sure you will do what is right."

Then he told his story, and oh, what a story! The part about Mary Lou was just about as I had figured it out. He told how his sister was high-strung and impulsive and crazy to be an actress or a movie star.

"She ran away from home, soon after I went abroad," Dodd said, still pacing. "She was little more than a kid, and had never been away from home much, so she hadn't the least idea what to do when she got to Chicago. She assumed a fanciful name, but that was as near as she ever got to the stage.

"After a week, she fell into the clutches of a man—a taxicab driver—who took advantage of her youth and innocence. He got her into trouble and then left her. She, poor kid, was terrified, so she came home to mother and confessed everything. She never told all the details, but it was easy to piece together her story.

"My mother was nearly crazy with grief and shame," Dodd continued, looking kind of crazy himself. "She feared publicity and scandal, because she was afraid it would ruin my career as well as Mary Lou's life. She made Mary Lou stay in the house, while she worried and prayed. There was no one to whom she could go for advice."

Dodd stopped a minute and looked in a queer way at the book Watkins had in his hand. It was the same book Watkins had been reading at the hotel, and Dodd looked as though he half-way expected it to say something. I do not think he ever actually saw any of us there except the prosecutor and maybe Watkins. I remember every word he said and how he said it, because I was more than interested. I got to thinking about Buck Hodges back in Chicago. I guess it is a good thing for him he turned bootlegger and went East.

"My mother kept putting off calling the doctor from day to day," Dodd went on. "Finally it was too late. Then she closed up the house and did what she could, herself, for Mary Lou. She knew nothing about such things, and Mary Lou and the baby both died. After that, my mother had only one thought, and that was to keep the thing a secret. All alone in that house with the bodies, she dug a place in the basement and buried them. How she did it alone, I do not know. She must have been a little demented."

Dodd shook like a leaf and covered his face with his hands. That last was the part I could not figure out by myself, but I saw he was telling the truth. There was nobody in the room doubted him. He went on with the story, but the rest was simple. Mrs. Dodd had lived alone in the cottage a year, after letting it out that Mary Lou had gone to California, not even writing her son what had happened. Then she went to join her daughter, so everybody thought, and six months later she sent word back that Mary Lou had drowned, which nobody doubted. Not even Arthur.

I began thinking what a whale of a story that was going to be, and I could picture already the eight-column strip of art across the front page, with a story that would be as long as the columns lasted. Mr. Morton believes in boiling stuff down, but he would throw out

everything but the ads for a really good story. And this was one of the best.

It was not as sensational, maybe, as a good murder would have made it, but it was chock full of what the boss calls human interest.

I suddenly noticed that Watkins was talking.

"I am the only newspaper man present," he was saying, "and I promise I will forget what you have said. And of course I will not say anything about it to my rivals."

He shook hands with Dodd and looked like he was about to cry. But that crack of his floored me, and I could not make head or tails of it. I did not pay much attention to what followed, only I did hear the prosecutor say that of course he would drop the matter and just make a formal report about finding the bodies of two persons who came to their deaths from unknown causes. I had a sneaking suspicion that Watkins had meant what he said, if you can imagine it. I soon learned.

"I certainly do not intend to write anything about it," he replied to my question. "That family has suffered enough, and there are some things even a newspaper reporter will not do. If you have a shred of decency about you, you will never mention what you have heard from Dodd."

"Decency, my aunt," I retorted. "Who are you to be speaking such fine words? Ain't you about to throw down your paper on the biggest story it ever had? A fine newspaperman you turned out to be."

"Brown," he said, looking at me in that nasty way of his, "I am convinced you have no finer sensibilities whatever."

"Maybe I got no sensibilities," I said, "but I got sense, and that will buy more groceries."

"All right," he said, turning away. "Tell Morton I have resigned."

And a good thing, too, I thought. A guy like that has got no business in the newspaper game. He ought to join a sewing circle. I learned later he joined the *Telegram*, which is just as bad.

It was almost daylight by then, and I waited around the hotel, going over the story in my mind and eating breakfast. Then I put in a call for the *Star* about the time for Mr. Morton to come down.

"Mr. Morton," I said, "this is Brown. Driving your studio truck up here at Wego. I got a good story, which your reporter fell down on."

Then I told him all about it, brief, but not forgetting to mention that I had had a good deal to do with it. I could hear him sputtering at the other end of the line.

"Listen, Brown," he barked at me. "Tell just enough of that to a rewrite man for the first edition— No! Wait! Do any of the other reporters up there even suspect any of this?"

"Not a suspicion," I told him.

"Come into the office as fast as that truck will bring you," he ordered. "Tell Watkins he is fired." So they were even.

Well, it was a fine story. We beat the whole world, and the front page was all art and my story. A rewrite man wrote it, but it was my yarn. It was hot copy, believe me, and darn good for a beginner like me. But the best was yet to come.

"Brown, do you know anything about writing?" Mr. Morton asked me.

"No sir," I said, "but—"

"Brown," he said, "don't learn. I can see right now you are going to be my star reporter."

And Mr. Morton mostly knows what he is talking about.

Well, Mrs. Dodd died a few weeks later. She did not look very healthy when I saw her that time in Wego. Arthur Dodd had some kind of trouble with his girl and they called the match off. I guess he started hitting the booze, and drinking is bad for you if you do it regular. I never saw him again until last week in that speakeasy, and I don't care if I never see him again.

OUR PERMANENT CRIME WAVE

BY EDWARD HALE BIERSTADT

CRIMINAL activities in this country cost us not less than thirteen billion dollars a year. This is more than the total of the war debts.

Before proceeding to discuss methods of dealing with the criminal in our midst, it may be instructive to observe just how the criminal deals with us, and the easiest way of achieving this is by means of a few figures that have been compiled by such authorities as the National Crime Commission and the American Bankers' Association.

America maintains an army of half a million police, judicial and enforcement officials, to stand off an opposing army of two million criminals. In this endless war there are twelve thousand five hundred fatalities a year, and at present there are about two hundred thousand prisoners held captive by the forces of law and order.

In Chicago—that jungle of the underworld—six policemen are shot for every criminal who is hanged. There are thirty-six more chances of being held up and robbed in New York than in London, and in Chicago the chances are one hundred. The New York burglar has thirteen chances to one in his favor. In London the odds are ten to one against him. In 1918, to cite a typical year, all of England and Wales together had 154 cases of homicide, murder and manslaughter. During the same period, New York City alone had 221 cases, and Chicago 222. We may have made America safe for democracy, but we certainly haven't made it safe for the law-abiding citizen.

From all of this it is clear that while we may be holding the enemy in check we are not making much real progress in winning the war. It may be that, as in the World War, the first hundred years are the hardest. It may be that we are not quite as efficient as we like to think we are. As a matter of fact, our criminal procedure is so antiquated that District Attorney Banton of New York was moved recently to remark that "Prosecuting criminals to-day is like trying to catch a 1927 automobile with an ox-team." And even then, Mr. Banton failed to point out the truism that before you cook your hare you must catch him, and that our police establishment is quite as much in need of overhauling as our courts.

Over and beyond either our criminal procedure, or our police organization, there are at least two definite factors in this country that militate strongly in favor of the criminal. The first lies in the enormous and ever increasing number of undesirable and unenforcible laws that clog our statute books (we have a total of 1,900,000 statutes on the books now); the second is due to the sentimentality of the American public, which alternately howls for more law and for less enforcement.

Our inundation of statutory law probably arises chiefly from our tendency to prohibitory legislation that is not supported by the majority of the people. A statute which regulates or corrects that which is a wrong in itself, such as murder or burglary, deserves and gets the whole-hearted support of the public; the statute which merely prohibits something that certain people choose

to believe wrong, such as the liquor traffic or the delivering of ice-cream on Sundays, is exceedingly difficult to enforce, and so tends to weaken the effect of law in general. Such laws are initiated and supported only by organized minorities. But with all our welter of laws we are very apt to wallow in sentimentalism when the matter of enforcement comes up. The following instance is, sadly enough, quite characteristic. In 1918, a coroner's jury in Chicago handed down a verdict that was remarkable for the manner in which it illustrated this penchant. A girl had killed her sweetheart, and the official opinion of twelve of her peers was that

> The evidence shows that Anton Jindra's treatment of her was most tantalizing, annoying and brutal; and because of this we believe that the said Pauline Plotka should be given the benefit of the doubt, and we, the jury, recommend that she be released from custody.

In other words, the charming Pauline, and all the other Paulines, were publicly notified that there was a permanent open season, in Chicago at least, for tantalizing males. What chance has law enforcement here?

This is the background of the picture. So far as the actual processes of law are concerned, in our dealings with the criminal, they run in somewhat the following order:

1. Prevention
2. Detection
3. Trial
4. Sentence
5. Punishment

These factors fall into the natural groupings I have indicated, for 1 and 2 are obviously matters of police concern; 3 and 4 are the care of courts and lawyers; while 5 is a problem for the prison authorities. But before going farther it will be as well to state an axiom, and this is that the chief deterrents to crime are just two in number: first, *the certainty of detection*, and, second, *the certainty of conviction*. On these two strictures hang all the law and the prophets so far as controlling the criminal is concerned.

The questions of the trial, sentence, and punishment of the criminal have been so thoroughly agitated that there is little need here for a detailed discussion. It will be enough to touch on them very briefly before coming to the matter of the police, our primary interest.

With the problem of prison conditions, as with most other problems, it is the plain, common-sense point of view that is safest. Any extreme is to be avoided, and our national tendency is to run to extremes. We are apt to be either savage or sentimental. Only a few years ago prison conditions in America were appalling. Indeed, they are nothing to boast of to-day. The dark-cell, the strait-jacket, constructed to torture rather than to confine, physical and mental violence of all kinds were everyday affairs. We were taking bad men and making them worse. To a considerable extent, this attitude has been replaced by one that has substituted the moving picture for the dark-cell, the coloratura sóprano for the strait-jacket, and amateur theatricals for the blackjack. We have gone from one extreme to the other, from savagery to sentimentalism. And in providing these unessential luxuries the necessities have, naturally, been overlooked. Thus, while we have moving pictures in Sing Sing, we have also a cell-block that was built in 1821 and condemned eleven years afterward as being unfit for human habitation. Yet men are living, and dying, in that cell-block to-day. And Sing Sing is no worse than most other state prisons, while as for our county jails, they are unfit for pigs. It is not essential that the convict be kept happy, but it is very essential that he be kept healthy, both mentally and physically.

Before the criminal goes to prison he must be sentenced, and for generations the question has been asked: In how far is the severity of the sentence a deter-

rent to crime? The answer has been given many times: If the sentence is too light, it is ineffective; if, on the other hand, it is too heavy, juries refuse to convict. Very few experienced lawyers or judges could be found who would not readily admit that more convictions for murder in the first degree would be forthcoming if the penalty were life imprisonment rather than death. This is not a matter of sentiment but of common sense. A penalty, like a law, that is not supported by a majority of the public is dangerous.

In the matter of our criminal procedure, there is a general recognition of the fact that we protect the criminal at the expense of the public. Our criminal procedure is based on that which obtained in England in the eighteenth century. English procedure, however, is by no means what it was two hundred years ago, for it was thoroughly revised in 1873, while American procedure is still substantially the lumbering machine that it was at the outset. Our criminal procedure is archaic to a degree; our criminal methods have marched with the times. In this country a veritable network of silly technicalities forms a protective barrier around the accused.

Our interminable delays in administering justice—witness the Sacco-Vanzetti case (if they were guilty, this delay of seven years was absurd; if they were innocent, it was outrageous)—our method of selecting juries, the abuse of the bail system, all make in the long run for the protection of the criminal.

Oddly enough, however, while we admit the faulty quality of our legal machinery, we seem less ready to confess, even to ourselves, that our police organization is quite as antiquated and creaky as our courts. We are alive to the necessity of bringing our cooking apparatus up to date, but we are still hunting the hare with a bow and arrow.

It is often urged in extenuation of America's apparent lawlessness that our population is largely heterogeneous, making our problem vastly more complex; and also that our public is not yet educated in the support of such institutions as the police force. These are not reasons; they are excuses. If our problem is more complicated, as it undoubtedly is, then our machinery should be the more efficient. And, as no police system here or abroad is much more than one hundred years old, our public has had about the same opportunity to educate itself as any other. To-day, Europe has an easier problem than ours and a far better equipment for handling it. We cannot hope to cope with our problem until we have bettered our machine. To deal adequately with our criminal conditions, both our court procedure and our police organization will have to be at least equal to the best procedure and organization now existing either in Europe or the British Isles. We have a very long way to go.

There are three tines to the police pitchfork—namely, national organization, local systems, methods. And, as it is the first of this trilogy that will engage our most emphatic attention, it will be best to dispose of the other two in advance.

II

The methods or technic employed by the police of different countries are largely dictated by the national temperament. Thus, the British are direct and practical; the French are volatile and inspirational; and the Germans are mechanical and efficient. A few examples will serve to illustrate this point.

Scotland Yard looks for the dominant note in the crime, the outstanding clue. Once this is found, it is run down, to the exclusion of all seemingly minor details. If it is not found, the Yard is sometimes stumped. Joseph Gollomb, in his work on European police organizations and methods of detection, provides a number of instances that are typical, and it is upon this material that I have drawn for the two following examples.

A series of six fires had broken out in

London, and the arson specialist of Scotland Yard was able to point out certain characteristics in each that suggested a common origin. Of actual, material clues there was none. The detective in charge of the case, however, found that one dominant fact stood out, namely, that in each instance the insurance policy was taken out with the same company and that the same agent had been employed. This gave him his start, and he was able to discover, first, that this agent kept in his pocket a notebook with a list of his clients; second, that the notebook had recently been out of his possession in a bar that was a notorious hangout for crooks; and third, that the book had been in the hands of a well-known pickpocket. This gentleman, on being rounded up, was induced to give a description of the amiable stranger at whose behest he had picked the agent's pocket of the book. The rest was routine; a watch was set on the premises listed that had not yet been burned, and the incendiary walked into the trap.

The operatives of the Service de la Sûreté in Paris, on the other hand, are able to produce results when there is no outstanding clue. A shot was heard at a garden party and one of the guests dropped dead. No one had been seen to shoot, and no weapon was found. There was no clue. The police assigned to the case took a list of all those who had been present, and their rooms were searched, a procedure that would be impossible in either England or America, by the way. In the room of one man, a detective noticed a walking-stick that was, somehow, rather out of the ordinary; and, being carefully trained not to let anything pass that appeared unusual, no matter how trivial it might seem, the operative found on closer examination that the walking-stick was actually a cleverly contrived gun. The murderer was found.

Nothing could be more characteristic of the German criminal hunting machine than the Meldwesen, that gigantic card-catalogue that identifies every man, woman, and child in the republic. Some idea of the immensity of this system can be gathered from the fact that the cards for the letter *S* alone—and that only for the city of Berlin—require twenty-one rooms to house them. The German method is more than mechanical, however; it is scientific, and this is even more true of Austria than of Germany itself. The methods of London and of Berlin may be compared to the practice of medicine. England relies almost wholly on the general practitioner; Germany puts her faith in the specialist. The professor, the chemist, and the analyst are constantly in demand. A German criminologist cites an instance in which a cap was picked up on the scene of a murder. Nothing characteristic about it was discovered except two hairs that had stuck to the band. These were turned over to the experts, who sent back a report that the owner of the cap was "a man of middle age, of robust constitution, black hair intermingled with gray, recently cut, commencing to grow bald." With this working description, the police were able to proceed. It is safe to say, indeed, that Sherlock Holmes would be hardly more than an amateur compared to some of the criminological experts of the Continent.

Probably every method of criminal detection that is in use in Europe is also, to some extent, in use in America. But there is no unification. The excellence of the local organization and the methods it employs depend in large part on whatever man is in charge. Some, a very few, are splendid; others are utterly inefficient. It is very improbable, for example, that such a double murder as the Hall-Mills case would have been left unsolved in Europe. For one thing, the public would not have been permitted to turn the scene of the crime into a buffalo wallow, obliterating all footprints. For another, such a significant combination of facts as the placing of the love letters and the pious laying out of

the bodies would not have gone unmarked. As against this clumsy work, however, we may set the rounding up of the d'Autremont brothers, now serving life terms for train robbery and murder. If my memory serves me correctly, the only clue found on the scene of the hold-up was a pair of overalls on which there were no distinguishing marks. The dust of the pockets was submitted to analysis, and the scientific experts were able to declare that the man who had worn the overalls had worked in a lumber camp that dealt in a particular species of timber. It was little enough, to be sure, but it was much better than nothing and, after a long, hard chase which extended over several years, the men were caught. The trouble with American police work is that it is spotty, ranging from positive genius in some localities to absolute idiocy in others. There is no unification.

The matter of the make-up of local systems can be briefly dismissed, so far as we are here concerned. Just as the crime-detecting methods of different nations reflect certain national characteristics, so do the systems that are formed to carry out these methods project the point of view behind the methods themselves. The German organization is mechanical and scientific; the French is much more flexible and somewhat less scientific; the British is preëminently common-sense. But, just as the organizations and methods of these countries differ, so does each American city differ one from the other. And here lies the secret of Europe's success in dealing with crime, and of America's failure. In Europe, one finds a national organization, built for permanency; in America, one finds a local organization, constructed to meet the exigencies of the political administration.

New York has had fourteen Police Commissioners in twenty-seven years. Chicago has had twenty-five Superintendents of Police in forty-nine years. From 1829 to 1914, eighty-five years, Scotland Yard had just six Commissioners. From 1848 to 1914, sixty-six years, Berlin had ten. The man at the top is the man who dictates the policy. As the man changes, the organization under him and the methods used by that organization are likely to change also. There is no building, no logical progression in America. Europe finds the best man to do the work that is required, puts him in office, and lets him alone. America usually asks little more than that the man in charge of her police be of the prevailing political party, yanks him out of office when he has barely begun to learn his job, and then begins all over again. No efficient police organization can be constructed on such a shaky foundation.

III

And now we come to the question of local rights as against federal, and it will be necessary to interject my own opinion into the discussion of this vexatious problem. It is simple, perhaps even naïve.

When public opinion varies with locality, as it almost invariably does with *malum prohibitum*, as in Prohibition for example, any statutes based on this opinion should be of local origin. But when public opinion is unanimous, as it is with *malum per se*, murder, burglary or what not, it will be found more efficient if a centralized, federal jurisdiction is substituted.

I am not going to argue for a national police or for federal control of our local police systems, but I do contend that, as the prevention and detection of crime are national rather than local problems, it will be more efficient if we consider them from a national rather than from a local point of view. The man who breaks into a house in California one month may break into a house in New York the next. In this connection it will be instructive to glance briefly at the solution provided by countries other than our own, and if in the comparison we find ourselves disposed to criticize

our neighbors as being less democratic than we—and at the same time more practical—we shall be forced to the conclusion that the type of democracy which is impractical is rather stupid.

Municipally controlled police forces exist only in the smaller countries of Europe. In such cities as London, Berlin, Paris, Vienna, Budapest, Madrid, and Lisbon the head commissioners of police are appointed by the State and are responsible to the Home Ministry. Glasgow, with a population of just over a million, is the largest city in Europe having municipal police control. In consequence of this, the police organizations of these cities can never be made the sport of local politics.

Scotland Yard was established in 1829, when Sir Robert Peel (the London policeman is stilled called a peeler), then Secretary of State for Home Affairs, created the Metropolitan Police system. This system was at first under two commissioners, but this was later changed to one, and all the commissioners have been directly responsible to the national government. In 1835 Parliament passed the Municipal Corporations Act which, with its subsequent amendments, has standardized the entire urban police administration of England and Wales. The Rural Police Act of 1856 did the same for the country districts. In spite of this unification, emanating from the national government, there is no despotism. The English public would not tolerate such a thing for an instant. The Home Office, in its relationship to the police organizations outside of London, is in no position to dictate, for it has no real authority. It has, however, a certain coördinating influence, and some pressure can be brought to bear in the following fashion. On a certificate from the Home Office to the effect that the police force of any given locality is efficient in numbers and in discipline, a sum not exceeding one-half of the total cost of the pay and clothing of the force can be contributed from the national treasury. This should not be considered as a subsidy but rather as a bonus. And here we have the ideal arrangement —*national supervision and local control.*

In Germany, for all the efficiency of Berlin, police control was vested in the several states that composed the empire before the War. Even here, however, in the larger cities the same tendency was manifest. Berlin, Dresden, Munich, and Hamburg were directly responsible to the state rather than to the local authorities. It has been said that the German police system is too autocratically centralized, but that is a German characteristic. Greater uniformity is to be found in Austria where, in the eight largest cities, the police heads are appointed by the State and are responsible to it.

In France there is local control, except in Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles. There is uniformity, however, through the Municipal Code of 1884, which is the basis of all village, town, and city government. The general organization, salaries, and other details of police departments in all towns and cities with more than forty thousand population are regulated by the Ministry of the Interior. In Paris, at the Service de la Sûreté, national and local interests are blended as at Scotland Yard.

The general police work of Italy is carried on by the Carabinieri under the direction of the Home Minister, who also controls the City Guards, who are delegated chiefly to detective work. The Carabinieri can be compared roughly to the Gendarmerie of France, except that the first are urban and the second are rural.

America is the only one of the great powers that has not realized the necessity for national supervision of the national problem of crime prevention.

We have three types of police force in this country: the various federal bureaus of investigation, each responsible to the Department in which it functions, and all concerned only with the enforcing of federal statutes (the

story of the welter these bureaus are in would make interesting reading); various state police forces or constabulary, which usually function as rural police; and the vast number of individual police forces belonging to the thousands of municipalities of the nation. It is these last with which we have chiefly to deal, for by far the greater part of the police work of the country is done by them.

In general, there are two systems in vogue among American police forces. The first constitutes the force as an independent organization, as in New York; the second places it as merely a part of the Department of Public Safety, as in Philadelphia. The force also functions variously under the direction of a Police Board, a single Commissioner, or a professional Superintendent. The development of the police force of New York is especially significant, not only because of the size and importance of that city, but because New York has led the way in the creation of American systems.

Prior to 1844, New York, with a population of more than three hundred thousand, had only two constables, elected annually, in each ward, a small body of men called marshals who were appointed by the mayor, and a citizen night-watch. In 1845, however, a law went into effect creating a day and night police. After twelve more years of wandering in the darkness of thought, the city decided to model its force on Scotland Yard, the most sensible decision it ever made, and municipal control was changed to state control. I do not need to tell of the wail that immediately went up from an outraged citizenry. We were aping the detested England, from whose loins we had so lately sprung and whose parentage we had spurned. We were taking the first step towards a monarchial, if not a tyrannical form of government. It was exactly the same outcry that went up when the force was first established, and again when it was put into uniform. Nevertheless, the force remained under state control for thirteen years, though little enough was done during that time to make it more efficient, and in 1870 back it came to the city, in order to assist the benign Mr. Tweed in his operations. It belongs to the city to-day. In 1901, New York again followed the example of Scotland Yard in having a single commissioner, and since that time, as I have said, she has endeavored to improve on her model by having fourteen.

Even the requirements for the prospective policeman, a man who will be obliged to carry considerable responsibility and wield not a little authority, are more often than not singularly lax in America. In forty per cent of the cities of thirty thousand or more population there is no civil-service requirement. In many cities the recruit is taken on for a probationary period of six months, and even then the instruction given him is haphazard. Only a few cities have training schools for their police, and in fewer still do these schools really amount to much.

In England matters are somewhat less casual. The applicant to Scotland Yard first has to pass six primary qualifications. He then appears before a Selection Committee which examines him further. If he is passed on by the Committee he enters the school, and there for eight weeks he goes through an intensive course of study. Having passed his examination here, if he does, the candidate becomes a probationary constable and continues his study under the direction of a divisional inspector for three months; another examination, another report to the Yard, and then another three months of training. And, after all that, the final examination. Not more than five per cent of the men who endeavor to enroll are accepted even as probationary constables, according to Mr. George Dilnot in his book on Scotland Yard. And this is merely the school for constables; the course for detectives takes a good six months more.

IV

With no centralized, expert supervision, with one type of organization jostling against another, with inadequate training, with neither correlation nor coördination, and with the ward politicians playing hob with the whole business of police work, is it to be wondered at that our annual bill for crime is thirteen billion dollars a year? The European police organizations, take which one you will, have been brought deliberately into being for the purpose of preventing crime and detecting criminals. They are constructed for permanence, and efficiency is demanded of them. American police systems—observe the plural—like Topsy, have "just growed." It has been and still continues to be an expensive process. Personally, I see only one solution:

Continuity of authority and of development.
National supervision and local control.
Reasonable uniformity of system and technic.

The first and most important step, and by all odds the most difficult in attaining these ends, would be the divorce of our police systems from our local politicians. But if this cannot be done the case is hopeless. Certainly it will be done only when the public wants it badly enough to insist on it and to fight to accomplish it. Possibly we shall prefer to go on being robbed and murdered in our present free and easy way. To-day America is the paradise of the criminal. It is literally true that ours is the one supposedly civilized country in which crime is a paying proposition for a capable crook, and in which the professional criminal is a good risk for any insurance company. A far better risk than a policeman.

Continuity of organizational development and of authority mean very much the same thing. Find the right man, put him in charge, and let him stay there as long as he does good work. The continuity of his authority will obviously make for the continuity of development that is desired of his organization. This will mean stability and growth and, if the man is the right man, efficiency. The kaleidoscopic changes that characterize our police systems to-day are preëminently destructive of everything pertaining to efficiency, including the morale of the force. It should hardly be necessary to discuss this question farther, but the American prejudice against continuing officials in office for long terms is so thoroughly ingrained that the matter cannot readily be dismissed. For my own part, I confess that I can see no valid objection to keeping a man in whatever office he may hold, from president to dog-catcher, just so long—and no longer—as he does the task assigned to him capably, honestly, and to the satisfaction of the public he serves. We do not subject our military machine to the vagaries of political expediency; and why the organization that protects us in times of peace should be dealt with less rationally than that which we rely on during war, I cannot understand. In view of this comparison, it is worthy of note that our annual crime bill is no less than the cost of one year of war with Germany. I am not suggesting that our police heads be appointed to life office, but I am suggesting that they be removed only for cause.

So far as the matter of national supervision and local control is concerned, I shall again fall back on the comparison of the police with the army. Take the instance of the militia of the various states. Surely, there is a strong similarity here, for the militia is entirely controlled by the state to which it belongs. It cannot be used by the federal government except with the permission of that state, and yet it is subject to the supervision of the Department of War. I think that it would be difficult to argue successfully that either the militia or the states which support it

are any the worse for this arrangement of national supervision and local control. In this connection, then, two possibilities arise. The first is the passage of a federal statute which will unify and standardize our entire network of police systems. The study preceding such a measure would, and should, be a long and arduous task, and the relationship between federal, state, and municipal organizations would have to be very carefully considered. Second, the establishment at Washington of a national police school or college. This would have courses for the police executive, the detective, and the patrolman. There is certainly not space here for a detailed discussion of such an institution, but it is possible to give a few indications of what might be covered in its work.

This training school would, of course, be staffed by a corps of experts on all branches of crime. Its curriculum would be the outcome of the most painstaking investigation, and a survey of the methods employed by other countries. Municipalities might then be encouraged to send at least a certain percentage of their police to the school at the expense of the national government, and it might even be desirable to arrange for some type of bonus to be given by the federal government to those states or cities which were able to show that a certain specific number of their police had satisfactorily completed the course. Such a step would have at least two important results. It would greatly increase the expertness of our police work, and it would tend strongly to unify and standardize our police methods.

It will undoubtedly make this picture more clear if I quote again from Mr. Dilnot. In speaking of the routine training of a constable for Scotland Yard, Mr. Dilnot says:

> Every contingency that a constable may have to face, from dealing with insecure cellar flaps to taking a dying declaration, to action in case of riots, and the privileges of ambassadors, is explained. He is shown how to make a report, and warned of the perils of making erasures or tearing leaves from his pocket-book. He is drilled, given gymnastic exercises, taught the main principles of ju-jitsu, and given instruction in the use and mechanism of pistols. The unobtrusive marks to be placed on windows, doors, walls, shutters and padlocks are made clear to him. He is told what to do should there be a sudden death in the street, should the roadside subside, should a street collision take place, should a gas explosion occur, should he be assaulted. He is initiated into the mysteries of scores of acts of Parliament.

And for the training of the detective:

> There are lectures on law, on evidence, on the practice of courts, on medico-legal subjects, on police regulations and practice. The pitfalls that beset a hasty or an ignorant officer are pointed out. He is taught the methods of criminals from gambling sharps to forgers, from pickpockets to petty sneak-thieves. He is shown jemmies, and the different marks they may leave, coining implements, shop-lifting devices, and the latest apparatus in the march of scientific burglary. He is made aware when he may arrest without a warrant and when a warrant is necessary. All that ingenuity and experience can suggest for the confusion of the criminal is taught him. He is shown where an expert must be called in, and when his own common sense must aid him. He is taught something of locks, something of foot-prints, something of cipher reading. The uses of finger-prints, the application of photography to the detection of crime, the machinery at his disposal in the Crime Index. . . . The gambits of an inquiry are explained, where he must begin and what he must look for. There is the manner in which he must keep a record, and the way in which to question a witness. Not everyone knows that there is a scientific formula for giving a personal description, and for searching a house for stolen property. These and a hundred other things are made known to him.

It should be clear from this that there is considerably more to modern police training than putting a man into uniform and pitching him into the street to get his experience as he can. Police work is a profession and must be taught as such. I do not cite the Scotland Yard formula as a criterion, however. Some

of the more scientific methods of the Continent should certainly have a place in any course created for police training in this country.

It is true that the larger cities, such as New York, might object that they already have training schools. Without pausing to argue the point, it may be answered that in any event their men could not be rendered any the less efficient by training in a national establishment, and that the vast majority of municipalities in America have no training school at all.

Moreover, this school or college would provide for more than academic training. Associated with it would be the present National Bureau of Identification, and its staff of experts would be available to any state or city that chose to call on them for help in a difficult case. This would be a godsend, especially to cities of the second class which cannot possibly afford to maintain such experts for their own use. The skilled crook can operate anywhere; the skilled investigator is usually to be found only in the largest metropolitan centers. Scotland Yard has a Central Office Squad which can be sent anywhere outside of London if there is need for it. There is no rational reason why some such plan could not be worked out here.

As for a reasonable uniformity in our police systems, this I have already covered. The federal statute I have mentioned, along with national supervision and centralized training, would readily bring this about.

And there, as I see it, the matter stands. Our police have been left to struggle along as best they could, derided by the public when they didn't get their man, and cursed when their methods savored of the strong-arm. They have been torn this way and that by politicians, and the few men who have been really able and who have tried to do constructive work, such men as ex-Commissioner Woods of New York and ex-Chief Vollmer of Berkeley, have gone without encouragement or recognition. If we want police protection we shall have to go after it systematically and scientifically. It is not a matter that permits of the casual treatment we have given it. But, if we do want it, we can have it.

So we revert to our original thesis, that the chief deterrents to crime are the certainty of detection and the certainty of conviction. If we are to have the first, we shall have to revise our entire conception of police work, substituting a national for a local point of view, and we shall have to reform our police systems and methods. If we are to have the second, we shall be obliged to reconstruct our criminal procedure. It is a big task, but it is worth the effort. Certainly, it will cost less than thirteen billion dollars a year.

IF WAR SHOULD COME . . .

AN ENGLISHMAN TO AMERICANS

BY H. M. TOMLINSON

OUR steamer was approaching New York. It was night. The weather was fine. I went out on deck and saw a light far away and low on the starboard quarter. At first I took it to be an unfamiliar planet; but then, briefly, it vanished.

"That's Nantucket," said a voice beside me.

May an Englishman admit that he was moved? Had it been the name murmured of a legendary star I could not have looked at that lamp of Nantucket with feelings more confused and inexpressible. Nantucket! I watched it till it went. What are names? They make music and songs in us too rare for any instrument or the printed word. Nantucket belongs to me as much as to any American.

So I did not answer the voice. It was that of an American friend who was leaning on the rail beside me. There was nothing I could say in answer to the friendly voice which had named one of my stars. The voice continued. My friend, I think, was unaware that he had fixed my thoughts so that they could find no utterance. He was all unaware; so he continued, dolefully, that what he was bringing over from Europe, chiefly, was the memory of Geneva and the doubts raised there by the futility of the discussions of the naval experts. Weren't they preparing for war again? Would men and women never show even common sense? What did I think? He was rather unhappy when he looked to the future, he confessed.

The light of Nantucket went out in my mind. For as to the subject of war it may easily be that I am a pathological case without knowing it. The very discussion of war, though but of its remote probability, affects me like a bad smell. Such an unpleasantness ought not to be, but there, sometimes, it is. One's sensitive nose instantly revolts, and so arises the need for, let us say, a sanitary inspection. We want our houses sweet. We have to open windows and let in some fresh air, while seeking the cause of this unwholesome annoyance. It has to be faced, it seems, this question of war, so we had better hold our noses and stoop over it. Speaking for myself, no matter how the subject is doctored to disguise its odor, with the traditional incense of national honor, with solemn anthems, with the epitaphs of heroes; no matter how, to keep our attention diverted from the highly repellent nature of this plague, we are cheered with brass bands, ornate theatrical costumes, cocks' feathers, banners, and the sobs of ladies who love good lads but don't mind seeing them go off to get mutilated (an exalted emotion, theirs, quite genuine, though its instinctive stirring in good Christian souls had better not be too closely investigated); no matter with what national songs and patriotic airs the reality of war is disguised, so that we may not guess or remember what we are really considering —for all that, it is a subject and a reality which I loathe as would anyone else the existence of a gas escape in a morgue.

The subject is obscene. But, as anyone knows who has ever been called to be one of a grand jury, obscene subjects must be at times considered by good citizens anxious for the health of the commonweal. So here we are. Let us have a little fresh air, while considering, because we must, what is in its nature disgusting.

As for me, I know what war is, though I am not going into so personal a matter; it merely prompts me to speak up when careless and thoughtless souls would discuss a future war as though it were an academic dispute over the probable finalists of the intercollegiate football matches. Calm talk of that sort is more than a man can stand after he has seen what happens when soldier boys get chlorine gas in the lungs, or what a group of children looks like when their bodies have been dispersed with an aeroplane bomb. He cannot be expected to be as casual about it as other people who know only the brass bands and the applause. And I am distinctly unhappy over it, even unreasonable. I have heard at home an ardent general on the retired list, who had never made his way through the wire with his pockets full of bombs, and never would, trying at a school prize-giving to arouse the enthusiasm of boys for the inevitability of war; talking airily but ignorantly of human nature and its proper and its inevitable functioning, and so on. And I wondered then as I listened what the parents of those boys would say and do if a pretty but immoral lady were to follow that general with similar advice to the boys about human nature and its inevitable functioning. That would raise a din, would it not? But the general's speech caused no protest. Nobody seemed to notice anything. Queer, the effect of these uniforms and that confident and hectoring manner of foolish but cheery militarists!

I clean forgot Nantucket light, as I took my friend's arm and led him into the smoking room. Because he was not the first to talk so. There had been others, and Englishmen among them, and none of them had spoken of it except in a helpless way, with a little shame, and as though destiny had marked them for the sport of the follies of statesmen and mobs. The two of us are never likely to have a cause for bickering, though he talks easily of dollars, and I always have to do a little mental arithmetic, usually wrong. His views of current books resemble mine, though not precisely; he can show enthusiasms where I will look embarrassed, and he is indifferent where, so I think, he ought to know better. He can eat corn on the cob in public and, though I should like to try it, I have not the nerve. Mine would be a poor and self-conscious performance. He has had to explain to me what waffles are, for I imagined they were a variety of quail. He has no sympathy with my preference for strong tea, nor my indifference to the matter of Prohibition, which seems to be a myth, and so need not be considered. But in all essentials we can stand easily together under two flags.

II

Nevertheless, the possibility that the two of us, for reasons so obscure that we could not guess what they were like, should begin to disfigure each other, was not unthinkable. We were actually thinking about it, though without clear cause, yet with deep concern. We discussed it because we knew full well that the powers behind Congress and Parliament are inscrutable and unpredictable in their movements, and appear to be preparing for war. They are doing that without intending war, of course, and, of course, without any consent of ours. Whatever may be the purity of our democratic institutions, the consent of citizens to the aims of those unseen powers which act behind the popular show of government is not required and is never invited. The powers act, and we never know why, though we are quieted with specious fables. And Admiralty officials, haughty through their long immunity while conducting their

spiritualistic seances in the dark, never ask for anything but our money, like all those who are skilled in divination and magic. You see, they know they are perfectly right, because they never prepare for anything but a "defensive" war and, therefore, their honor cannot be doubted. Has any nation in modern times ever waged a war which was not defensive and directly under the patronage of a just God? Not one. As Mr. Squire once sang in a late war:

God strafe England, and God save the King,
The embattled nations sing and shout.
God this, God that, and God the other thing.
"Good God," said God, "I've got my work cut out."

In the light of reason, it all looks like the designs in straw in the beards of incurable lunatics. But it happens to be real, and worse, it is highly dangerous, for the men we don't know but who control our affairs on both sides of the water have charge of powers which now, if loosed, could turn this world into an ash-heap. Are they to be allowed to do it? If not, what are we going to do to stop it? Shall we own up and say that democratic government by Anglo Saxons is but a dull farce which we cannot mock off the stage, and so go to our several but similar dooms?

Speaking for my own country, I would not trust its present well-intentioned ministers with the sagacious settlement of any major problem which involved both the welfare of the money power behind Parliament and the welfare of common folk everywhere. The intelligence, information, and honesty of the majority of politicians and statesmen of any civilized nation, it is manifest to us to-day, are of a quality which would never pass a candidate to the headship of a high school. Anyhow, I will speak of them as they are over the water. Incapacities which would disqualify a man who would serve in science, in literature, in music, in the arts do not matter in a Member of Parliament. The reason is obvious. Our elected Members of Parliament—I know nothing whatever of the corresponding body in America—do not really shape English affairs. The unseen masters of the British public are the financiers and industrial magnates. We always forget them, of course, while admiring Mr. Baldwin's leisurely and reassuring pipe. National policy in any industrial society is shaped nowadays to the advantages of the people who are in the advantageous positions. Perhaps the case is not the same in America. It may be otherwise here. Americans will know whether it is or not.

Then those naval and military experts! Those gentlemen, of course, are always energetically preparing for war—for the last war, as a matter of fact, never for the next. When a general or an admiral goes forth to war he goes to school, and he has no idea what the lesson is going to be. But you never discover that till after he has started out. He begins to learn his business when the show opens; yet that never matters nowadays: there are always large numbers of men to be brought up to take the places of those who die to educate the generals. I should say that no country was ever in such a parlous state of insecurity as when it has handed its "preparedness" over to those gentlemen. You might as well trust to table-rapping as to the devices of the various offices for war—in fact, strategy and tactics have many points of resemblance to what is occult.

There it is. They are still talking of war and preparing for it. We cannot trust either the elected politicians or the established military experts to give body to our common and natural desire for a world in which we may do our work in peace. What is to be done about it? Well, consider first the things we allow to be done, with the object of peace. It is evident that what has given rise to this nervous talk about the future is plain funk. In England certainly it is fear, and it arose out of the failure of the experts at Geneva. Yet what should

we have expected to get there but failure? I have never heard that Americans gave the brewers the job of settling the little problem of strong drink. Then why expect an admiral to sink his ships or a general to reduce his bayonets? At Geneva, to be sure, was the approach to the Golden Age which we should have looked for, but which so alarmed us: we are to get peace with milder torpedoes. Naturally, a gunner would think it utterly unfair to take the Golden Age by surprise. Its oncoming, he thinks, should be heralded with lessened explosions. If we wish to prove our friendliness to the herald of the Prince of Peace, then we ought not to worry the hovering messenger by firing our largest anti-aircraft guns at Heaven. Give the heavenly messenger a chance. Don't put the angel off completely. But don't allow him to alight. That would never do. He would be here then. Keep him hovering around!

But there are creatures other than angels about us, with messages not so divine, and they are—apart even from the politicians and the militarists—people who need watching as closely as do those who have the habit by night of dropping arsenic into wells. We have in our midst, in England and here, men who think a little drop of poison now and then may do us no harm. I read recently in an American publication that, with few exceptions, all Englishmen hate Americans; which may not seem unlikely to Americans who have never met any but unpleasant Englishmen. The same writer declared that predatory England but waited for the chance—among other things—of robbing Holland of Java. That, too, might seem likely to Americans who have never been to Java, do not know the good understanding which exists between the English and Dutch, and are unaware that the Dutch in Java are comforted by the proximity of Singapore. It seems absurd to have to exclaim against such silly lies, yet they were published here, and in a responsible magazine. Why? One would very much like to learn the spring of such an action. It would make a curious study. For my part, some of my best friends are Americans—though, to the writer I have mentioned, who thinks the English are craftily seeking world dominion, and want to put America under the Union Jack, that would only prove my American friends to be venal and willing to take English gold for the sale of their country. Well, I have not paid them yet, and my remittance seems so long in coming from Sir Austen Chamberlain that I do not know how I can square the deal; which is distinctly unfair of Sir Austen, and lets me down. However, doubtless good Americans know how to answer a fellow countryman who is sure they are capable of taking money for the sale of the Stars and Stripes. That is scarcely my affair. I can only say that to me the American scene, though unfamiliar in many of its aspects, is only an extension of my own heritage. I will confess also that when traveling in strange places the sight of the Stars and Stripes over some office or another was to me an assurance of aid, did I need it. I never had to test it, but it was pleasant to see the sign there. What I mean is, that that flag was to me, perhaps wrongly, a token of fraternity. My predatory instincts may be anything the American critic imagines, but I can assure him, for myself and many other Englishmen, that such names as Maryland and Virginia, for example, have a significance which extends to wherever his flag may fly. New England! How could a Londoner not feel at home there?

What I think many Americans do not realize is that the England of to-day is not the England which existed up to 1914. I do not say there are many signs of a difference. The difference is within and is not yet manifest. The England which Rudyard Kipling celebrated in song is finished. Its old spirit is dead. The word Empire, in spite of many urgent and busy propagandists at home who fear the worst, no longer causes much enthusiasm. We are shy

of the word. The end of Empire was prophesied in the corruption of Ypres and the Somme. We know that. We have had a dire experience, and now would be glad to be relieved of an old responsibility. The word Commonwealth is better. The idea that most Englishmen still look to their battleships as a sign of something peculiarly their own, of an impregnability in possession which nothing can ever alter, is one which could be entertained only by ignorant folk who know no more of naval strategy than they know of fairies and goblins. The people in England who sat under the raiding aeroplanes and Zeppelins, night after night, for years, are sadly informed now of the reality of their insular position. They may not have argued it out, but they doubt that battleships are what they were; and, in truth, warships are not what they were, though admirals will continue to fool about with them if they are allowed to. The common-sense policy for the British delegate at Geneva would have been to have declared for a reduction in armaments by them, in any case, and for America to be free to build all the warships she wanted, as she is well able to pay for them—as England is not—and certainly will have them if she so desires. For that is the point, and it is well realized at home: England cannot now build against America, and had better not try. What we ought to do is to offer to build America's warships for her, if she wants them in a hurry, and cannot construct them all herself. It might help the cause of peace if we handed over a large body of our skilled out-of-work merchant seamen as potential American crews!

III

For I decline to take this probability of war at all seriously. Well, not too seriously. If our several publics will not attend to their own well-being, will not insist that the peace they desire is to be secured for them, and continue to suppose there is something in the old parrot-cry that to ensure peace a nation must be prepared for war—notwithstanding the glaring fact that Europe was never better prepared for war than it was early in 1914, though never farther removed from peace—then a man can do no more than make the protest I am making now. But, should armaments not secure peace, as they never have, and war should come, then the part for some of us is clear. Whoever may be the enemy, whatever may be the stated reason for war, good citizens can have no part in it. I, for one, will not serve, will not help, will not pay, and am prepared to take the consequences. There are worse things than even the obscenity of the battleground, and one is the denial of the light. Light has come to some of us, and we will have no more to do with that obscene outrage on the intelligence men call war. Let those who like it get on with it. For if the stupidities of our governors, and the apathy of our publics, once more allow the plague to spread, then humanity will richly deserve its fate, which would surely come. The world may not be worth the saving. Men and women had better die out; and most likely they would.

There is something else, and this I will address to unconvinced Americans. If war came between us, I feel sure that my own country would lose. Certainly she could not win it, and she understands that. But if Americans imagine that victory would be theirs as a consequence of the defeat of England then they are mistaken. America has a vast industrial population; its factories reach from the Atlantic coast to Chicago. Those factories must find work. Now, at present, a great part of the colored population of the world is under the control of Europeans, but the control is weakening; the native races are not only armed, but discontented and aspiring. Also, there is Russia; something queer has happened there, and not one of us could put a period to it, however much we may hate and fear it. There the new idea most

assuredly is, and it is very potent. That idea is understood, though ignorantly, as far away from Moscow as the East Indian archipelago. Russia is also, let us remember, to a great extent, Asia. China, with its many millions who now seem to have surrendered their old pastoral placidity, and taken to factories and guns and the other appurtenances of industrialism, is within reach of Russia. Again, there is India, an immense country. Perhaps England would like to drop India now, but if she did it would go to pieces. She cannot let it go if she would. There are also the Turks; and there are regions of Mohammedans under the French flag and not loving it too much. A pretty prospect?

It would be prettier if England went down. It would be the prospect, anyhow, which America would have to face. Would she call it victory? With all the earth in uproar and flames? That is the extent of the fire she would have to put out, and at once; though by the time she had finished the job the Ford workshops and all such would be roosting places for birds and squirrels.

That would be the scene over which America could sing its song of triumph. She would be as lucky as the gambler who had won overnight the whole fortune of an opponent and discovered next morning that the vouchers were for mortgages and the debtors were howling at his gates. America would have won a magnificent and final bankruptcy. I think I have sensed, since I came to America, that she has a quite new realization of her immense strength. Her people are confident in a power which, they have discovered, overnight as it were, is superior to the material might of Europe. And Americans are not misinformed about their strength; they have it. Pride comes with that realization, naturally, and it will be hard to resist a desire to display the force of so extraordinary an endowment, because it is easy to be confident when you are sure you can do what you want to do. The United States of America could match themselves, if they wished, with the United States of Europe. That may be admitted.

But there is this to be remembered by all of us: The complex and powerful machinery of modern industrial society is very delicate. It is motived by human needs everywhere in the world, and it is kept going by the energy of human hope and aspiration. The regions of iron and steel works, the coal mines, the herds of beef and the belts of wheat, the cotton mills, the oil wells, the shops of the engineers, the vast network of ships on the seas moving and intersecting to schedules in many offices where the needs and demands of people on far coasts are known and carefully provided for, and the mysterious play of the bankers and financiers behind so vast an industry of millions upon millions of busy workers whose labors keep the earth sweet and turning round with regularity from profitable morning to morning; all that, though it is as natural and proper as any coral reef or jungle growth, and more interesting to watch, is in reality much more frail than a community of the coral polyps which depend for a nice adjustment of tides and temperature to keep their reef growing.

The truth is, we know more about the secrets of the coral reef, the ant hill, and the beehive than we do of the laws which give health or cause sickness in the human industrial community. Very few bankers or great organizers of industry have much knowledge of the hidden springs of their profits. They understand the machinery only when it is running freely; and generally it runs so freely that they imagine their profits are the gift of the good God who ordered a world so favorably for them.

We may or may not blame God for it; but in any case the favor may be withdrawn, and without warning. The warm and comfortable tides which keep our industries sweet and growing so naturally may, after all, be deflected, grow chilly, and the industrial polyps may perish.

For the present spectacle of busy and interdependent humanity is quite new to the world. It is not more than two centuries old. It is too young to understand itself, and too eagerly developing its rich resources, which appear to be inexhaustible, to bother much about the why and the how of it. The impressive show all came out of the steam engine, the electric telegraph, and the many inventions which made the production of goods so easy that white men found they required markets beyond their own borders in which to sell their goods —Africa, India, China, Persia, Arabia, the East Indies, and the South Seas.

Without knowing it, men have made their earth one sphere at last. There is not an eastern and a western hemisphere any longer. There is the globe.

The last war, though many Americans do not know it—which is not a matter of surprise, for America seems so prosperous—most seriously dislocated that complex but delicate machinery of industrial society. So far as Europe is concerned, it is a wonder that it was sufficiently readjusted to get going again near enough to make a decent semblance of its old activity. All the same, some things have gone irrevocably out of Europe. There is, for example, a whole generation of young men, that very stratum of society where chiefly resides its dynamic power, its invention, its enterprise, its poets, artists, and musicians. That is gone out of Europe. The men who still direct Europe's affairs are the very fellows, for the most part, who brought Europe to its disaster. And the menace of the new idea which has arisen in Russia is real and, I think, is inextinguishable. I have been surprised by the evidences of its world-wide potency. More, make no mistake about it, the certain consequence of the defeat of any nation is revolution, and the overthrow of the ascendency there of its traditional order; no nation is exempt from that law, not even England. For the memory of the last war, and what caused it, and who profited by it, though the memory is now unvoiced, is kept by innumerable hearths in Europe, in Australasia, South Africa, and Canada; and that dark memory will make all the difference next time.

So Americans had better be warned that should they, victorious in another calamity, feel that the time has come for them to repose with the fruits of victory, the latest to succeed to the dominions which once were Rome's, then they may be gravely shocked. Victory will but herald the beginning of a planetary fire which, it seems to me, they will be unable to douse. The world will be in flames, and it will burn out. From the safety of their victory they will be able to contemplate the unwanted but continued disruption of empires, the breaking of nations and peoples through traditional confines and controls, anarchy at large. What effect this will have on New York and Chicago I do not know, though I can guess. The wheels will stop, the factory stacks will cease to smoke. That is fairly certain. But that will not matter very much to Europe, for it will have plenty of smoke elsewhere to watch.

MEAT

A NOVEL

BY WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

PART II

Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.—I Corinthians viii:13.

Summary of Part One: —Anne Flagg India had been gloriously healthy in mind as well as in body; yet when she bore a son Rex, marked with the same physical blemish which had previously marked an irresponsible cousin, the fear that Rex would grow up to resemble this dissolute kinsman made of her a zealot. As time went on, her husband, Sam India, found that his wife's love was not only concentrated upon the dull, awkward, queer child, but—fanatically—upon the fierce resolve to remove temptation from his path.

The Indias had an older boy, Flagg, and an adopted daughter, Fern, whom they had taught to regard herself as Flagg's twin. Sam India—and Anne too, before Rex was born—had hoped to bring up these older children to live with gusto and moderation and to look on all life with eyes open and unafraid. But Anne India now saw ugly possibilities in everything that might touch Rex's life—even in the innocent sport of the three children as they played together. Determined to protect Rex at any cost, at last she forced her dismayed husband to send Fern away to boarding school. The poor child did not know why she was sent,—how could Sam India tell her? Was everything, he wondered, even the candor in the eyes of Flagg and Fern, to be sacrificed that nothing might cause this younger son to offend?

IT WAS amazing what, almost single-handed, Anne India had done with her last-born by the time he was going-on-twelve. Of a quiet cast, more given to shadow than to shine, if he still lacked something of the grace of the ordinary child of his age, something of the mental resilience and physical dexterity, yet he was certainly no queerer to the casual glance than are many boys who are not considered queer at all; no queerer, probably, than Hamlet at his years.

Doctor Blakeley, for all his cheerful prophecies, was amazed himself, and gratified. As the angels in Heaven in the hundredth come to repentance, so the medical man was more eagerly interested in the weakling saved than in the ninety-and-nine decently found to begin with. More than once, at something the wooden fellow would do or say to show he was nobody's fool, the doctor would cry, "Between you and me, Mrs. India, by gracious, we'll make a congressman out of him before we're through."

Or as Flagg put it, "Nothing much gets by Rex, I'll tell you that."

Flagg had taken to trapping rabbits, up behind the ridge. All the boys at school were doing something; the money they earned went into the "club" that "sent to the Belgians." There was to be another year yet before his own country went into the war, but the section was strongly pro-Allies; one of the papers his father took in was a mouthpiece of the British government, and Flora, the second-maid, a Cornish

girl, had lost her lover in the fight out of Mons. The imagination of a lusty fourteen-year-old had to be in it. It was always with an air of martial adventuring that he started out of a snowy morning to make the round of his traps; his changing voice rumbled its deepest as he cried, "Come on, Rexie, let's see how many Huns we've caught to-day."

One morning Rex came upon a rabbit caught by the forepaw in one of the line of traps he was following. In place of calling his brother to deal with the creature he fell to the work himself. Flagg found him making what at first he took to be a fumbling botch of the business, his pocket-knife gory, the skin ruined, the rabbit screaming.

"Get its heart out!" was all Rex would say when Flagg had pulled him off. "It's a Boche! Get its live heart!"

"Wh-where'd you—who t-t-told you anything l-l-l-like—"

The look of Rex, his mouth blue, his pupils swollen, and the rest of his face as quiet as something frozen, was enough to make anyone stammer.

The youngster writhed to get back. "Germans are bloody. They murder people. They murdered the Belgians; they murdered Flora's Frank; she'd like to eat their hearts raw; she told me so. Let me go, let me go!"

It was a lot of war in one dose for Flagg. His stomach did funny things. So did his fingers. One of the first of the laws of life was that no hand should ever be lifted against Rex. He was appalled when he heard Rex whimper.

It had to come out when they got back home, for the marks were on them. Father looked a little green, as if his stomach, too, were doing funny things. But mother only put her arm around the shaken cadet's shoulders, and with the eyes burning black in the large white oval of her face, half witch's, half nun's, she said, "The people who feel things first are the ones who suffer. We'll all be feeling what this one feels, a year from now."

This took Flagg down a peg. It impressed him. He began to wonder if his young brother hadn't some qualities and powers, not only that he himself hadn't, but of a kind so rare and subtle as to be beyond the ordinary lubber's imagining.

If it had been he, for instance, who had come out morally on top in this set-to, he was sure he would have swelled a little; there would have been at least one gleam in his eye. Not so with Rex. When his gaze passed over the big brother who had mistreated him it was already opaque again with its habitual abstraction.

Flagg was so uncomfortably impressed that he failed to recognize as consequences two things that presently came to pass. One was the dismissal of Flora, the second-maid. The other was the disappearance of father's newspapers from the library table. He had never heard his mother's dictum: "If it will hurt him, keep it out of his way."

Neither had Doctor Blakeley. "You've been marvelous with Rex, Mrs. India," he said many times. "I don't see how you've done it." This was because he lacked the one thing that makes a doctor a great doctor, an imagination. He had no extra eye. He did not know an act of transubstantiation when he saw it under his nose.

He marvelled at the way the muscles filled out in the poor lad's neck; he would never have guessed in a thousand years what that flesh was made of. Pieces of the mother, cut away from herself deliberately, Shylock-wise, to engraft there. Here a shred of her old sensuous joy of living. Here another shred, here another, till she had none left of that. Here the tissues of her sense of humor, till that was gone. Here her exuberance, her grace of intellectual charity, her hatred of anything less than the fairest of fair play.

If you had told Doctor Blakeley that she had lost substance he would have doubted your sanity. "Sacrifice doesn't

work that way, my friend. Gained, rather. All you have to do is look at her. She has found something most of us will never find this side of Heaven. Look at that brow."

Blakeley had been amazed by the increasing soundness of Rex's bone-work. He would have been infinitely more amazed had you tried to tell him that by the time the boy had established the straightness of his legs, Anne India had lost the straightness of her thinking.

Her husband was with her more than the doctor. Sometimes, after long intervals when it mattered little and was almost forgotten, coming out at him suddenly it "knocked him cold."

One night they were sitting in the library, Anne reading, he neglecting to. As he dreamed, there was a light on his face.

He had just returned from a three-day trip to Montreal, bringing with him a sheaf of letters written by a Canadian infantryman (now dead) to his son. India's firm had had a tip that the letters would make a book; having read them now India needed no tip; he knew. Nothing that he had seen in words, for simplicity, clarity, bravery of vision in a time of darkness, had so much as touched what these letters resolutely grasped. To Sam India, as a layman, they had come like a cup of cool water in the sweaty scuffle of these days. Simply as a layman. As a publisher, then—no wonder, as he sat there thinking, there was a light on his face of excitement and content.

Anne said abruptly, "A penny for them, Sam."

Startled, as a man will be, he flushed and began to stammer.

"What is it, Sam, makes you look so —so secretly pleased with yourself?"

Even less than her tone, it was the quality of her scrutiny, narrow-eyed and coldly penetrating, that changed his confusion to dismay. She persisted.

"What made you tell me all this fairy-tale about going to Montreal?"

"Mon-Montreal? Why, Anne dear, why shouldn't—what are you trying—"

"Only this. Another time, when you feel you have to run up to the school at Walcott to see Fern for a day or so, don't make the mistake of imagining that I mind. Why should I? What I mind is —what I mind, Sam, is this cat-that-has-eaten-the-canary thing."

If he could but have burst out laughing. But he couldn't; he was more sharply frightened than he had ever been in his life. This turning wrong-side-out of a mind he had once supposed he knew, was too sudden and too complete. In face of it no word he could have uttered would have seemed to have any meaning.

He got his evening paper up in front of his eyes.

India did go up from time to time to the village in the Berkshires where Fern was in school (though it had never struck him as the sort of thing he would need to hide from Anne or from anyone else). Each time he went, it was with a fool's eagerness. Much as he loved Flagg (and much as he loved Rex, of course), from her babyhood this girl with the dark-red hair and the sea-gray eyes who was no flesh of his had had a place in his heart that could never quite belong to any other person. It was going to be an adventure of a kind that hadn't its exact like anywhere else, to see her for a day or so, even an hour or so, again. Each time.

And each time, walking down the long drive to the gate after taking leave of her, he was to have a taste of ashes in his mouth.

He had looked forward to long walks, and they had long walks, over crackling country roads if it was winter, under green-misted boughs across the hills if it was spring. Long talks, and they had long talks. But curiously, dismally, and not because the head beside his shoulder was always higher than it had been last time, she was not the Fern he had known, the "twin." Always he had the feeling that she was walking *with* him, talking *to* him, never that they were walking and talking together.

Her surface sweetness, with a glitter on it, was what hurt him. Had she been moody, had she been willing to show him by a hint that she wondered to find herself still here in an exile unexplained, he could have borne it better. Dumbness, morosity, restraint of any kind, he could have dealt with. But almost from the first she had discovered the gift of the worldly-wise woman with an awkward guest, never at a loss for small-talk to fill a gap, taking the burden, running on lightly about her life, the teachers, the girls, their parties, their packages, their escapades, until India, growing hollower and hollower, would have liked to cry, "What are they to you? Why don't you wonder about Flagg? About the garden, the house, and your mother, and about when you're going to be sent for to come home?"

It was extraordinary how obtuse the man could be. If he could have seen her after he had left her and she had returned his last hand-wave with an easy, far-off, painted grace—seen her then hidden down behind the white pillars of Home Hall, not crying, but swallowing, her lips blue and her eyes dry—it would have grieved him perhaps, but with a grief at the other pole from this sense of disjunction and loss that he carried through the gates, ashes in his mouth and lead in his shoes.

It is curious how quickly even wretchedness forms habits. Each time, waiting for the train, he said to himself: "It will all iron out; it will all be different when we have her at home again for keeps."

They had tried having her at home, not for keeps, but over occasional holidays, but it had never worked. If it was her gracious equanimity that unsettled her father in his visits to the school, there was nothing of the sort to bother him here. Rather the reverse. She seldom spoke unless spoken to, seemed constrained, as with strangers, and showed no eagerness to play.

It fell hardest on Flagg. Flagg, whose memory was not so deeply rooted in instinct as the girl's, had looked forward to these reunions with excitement, anticipating the hours he and his "twin" were to have, once more inseparable. It upset him then to find her edgy and ill-at-ease with him, and plainly more at home with Rex. As a matter of fact, looking out for Rex was about the only thing she did with any relish, and if it was a dogged relish, mixed in equal parts of perversity, shyness, and self-preservation, Flagg could not be expected to see through that.

If this phenomenon disturbed Flagg, it disturbed his mother no less. Nothing could have been farther from her desires than to have Rex forever in the shadow of Fern. A dozen times a day she would put in between them.

"Rex is tired, Fern; you run on out. No, Rex, I mean it. Yes, Fern, I mean it. Run along and play with Flagg. There he is now."

And when not more than an hour later Anne had to do the same thing all over again, it was inevitable that her voice should be sharper. It was bound to produce a friction, and the friction heat. That it never came to open flame was due to the fact that it was decided in time (tacitly, of course, all around) that the holiday home-comings would not do.

"You can go to see her quite often, Sam. And so can I."

"How about Flagg?"

"Flagg! Heavens! don't worry about Flagg. He has too many new things cavorting through his life all the time; nothing's fatal at that age."

So it was Fern's own fault, for acting in the queer way she did with Flagg and with Rex, that she ceased coming back to them for her holidays. They all saw that. That they failed to see her deeper fault, and the real reason that moved them, was perhaps because they did not dare.

The worst thing the home-comer could have done, and the one she would do inevitably, was to miss things. Being in a wordless mood she rarely inquired about them aloud; perhaps it was be-

cause it was done in almost unconscious pantomime that it was the more painfully revealing. Half her time she seemed to be looking for remembered objects that were no longer there, the other half waiting for things to be done that were no longer done.

To those who had remained in the house through the months she had been away the process of elimination had been sufficiently gradual as to pass almost unnoticed: one week a medical treatise with plates gone from the library shelves, another a pattern magazine discontinued, another a greener patch on the dining-room paper showing where the steel engraving of nymphs and satyrs had hung. It wanted an eye like Fern's to get, all in a lump, how gutted the house of her childhood began to look.

When old Sam Henry, the Second, brought back with him from Paris a marble copy of the Medici Venus and set it on a corner table in his hall (not far from the fireplace with its impious legend) it had raised a mild rumpus among the gossips of the neighborhood. There had been some ladies who for weeks had not been able to pass from the front door to the drawing-room without a fearful feeling that if they did not hurry they would simply have to look.

It is melancholy, though, how swiftly time kills thrills. In all probability not half a year had passed before the last lady, eyeing aslant that pure white startled gesture of human beauty covering its nakedness with its nakedness, branded it with a last, "I should think you *would* be ashamed, you hussy." After that, for upwards of sixty inglorious years, the figure had nothing more important to do than to invest that corner of the hall with a character of classical symmetry, so that the eye, passing over it, no matter how inattentively, was conscious that there was something that was right . . . until the day when Anne India's younger son left his cap on that corner table, quite by chance, and came back to look for it.

Anne was passing through the hall at that moment.

"There it is, darling," she pointed it out to him, and would have thought no more of it. But when she returned from the library presently and found the odd child, his cap retrieved, still loitering there, bemused in contemplation of the goddess, she came to a stand.

"Rex!"

He had a way of not hearing, and when he was like that there was always trouble ahead. Moved by some impulse enigmatical in him (in Flagg or another it would have been nothing more than a prank, but Rex was not given to pranking), he climbed on a chair of a sudden, put the cap on the statue's head, climbed down, and stood away again.

The cap, of course, was miles too large; it nearly eclipsed the goddess' face and hung to the left shoulder at an angle at once slatternly and incalculably rakish. Anne had to catch her breath. By a magic as swift and slight as that, out of a fragment of the integral beauty of old Sam Henry's hall a naked bawd was conjured, an amorous flesh, a practiced coquetry of cringing. If you don't believe it, try the same trick sometime on that masterpiece of the lost sculptor of Hellas.

As always, at need, Anne moved quickly. She got Rex's cap on the right head, and the boy himself out-of-doors. Then she rang for the maid, and had the maid call in Hames, the chauffeur-gardener.

Her husband and her elder son had been for a tramp; it was Sunday morning. When they returned to find the hall furniture rearranged they took it in different ways. They had both been born in this house, but India had been born longer ago than Flagg, so his fetch-up was the sharper.

He said nothing, though. He stood blinking for as much as a minute, plainly turning the business over and over in his mind for the answer he knew must be hidden somewhere there. Presently his eyes came back from a corner. Darkness crossed his cheeks. Turning,

still without a word, he passed into the library, sat down in a chair, and stared at the rug.

Flagg's reaction was another matter. He was, of course, delighted. Change is adventure. He went cruising around like a giddy Columbus, trying an old chair new in a new place, bombarding his mother with "Whys."

"Why's this table here, mother? Wasn't it—wasn't it in some corner—that corner there? Oh, and didn't it have something on it?"

"We've shifted everything around, Flagg dear. Rex, run and tell your father dinner's on."

"But what *was* it? I know, just as well as anything, only I can't—"

Rex had not gone. "There was that statue," he said.

"*I* remember. That white one. Where's it now? I don't see."

"There didn't seem to be any place for it, this way."

"Oh, please, then, may I have it in my room?"

"It's gone. Run scrub yourself for dinner, son."

"Gone where?"

"I gave it away. . . . Sam, dinner's on; won't you come now?"

After Sunday dinner Flagg was generally so full of food that he was quite willing to "lie down a while." This meant that for an hour cannons could not have awakened him. . . . To-day he lay down, but at just about the instant his head was starting to swim away, for no reason at all he opened his eyes again wide and started thinking.

She gave it away? To whom? And on Sunday morning, between eleven and one. Funny. . . . His thought was not so much like one thing as like a flock of things, like a flock of birds gathering to winter crumbs, another and another dropping out of nowhere, flashes of recollected discrepancies so slight, taken singly, as to have been almost forgotten. . . . The picture of the woods-ladies and goat-men from the dining-room, she had not given that away, for Flagg knew, quite by chance, where it was this minute. And he knew where the vanished Illustrated Bible and the "History of the Rod" were, too. . . . Mother had said, though, distinctly, that she had given this statue away. So. . . . Flagg shut his eyes. Now he would go to sleep.

But very presently he was up, stealing through the top hall. Everyone was resting, so he made no noise. He was especially careful to keep the stairs from creaking as he mounted attic-ward.

And sure enough, back in the cavern of a gable-end, swathed in an old bed-comfort, there the missing statue was. Flagg sat down on the case that held the banished books and pictures and studied.

Mother had told a story. Might as well say it: mother had told a lie. Why? He would have been more deeply hurt had he not been so profoundly puzzled.

To begin at the beginning, mother would rather have her tongue cut out than tell a lie. There lay the kernel of the enigma. The importance to her of removing and sequestering this piece of marble must be greater, then, than the importance of not having her tongue cut out. Why? Why?

Was it anything about the statue itself? Squeezing his brain, staring hard at the swathing quilt with the marble head stuck out of it, he tried to re-envisage the rest of that familiar ornament. But the trouble was that it was too familiar. Having been brought up with it since babyhood he had never thought to look at it twice. Intrigued, excited as any explorer, and yet with a tiny sense of guilt (since mother must obviously have her reasons) he reached and pulled away the covering.

He sat for a moment simply puckering his brows. He remembered the thing now, with its white arms bent in that singular fashion, awkward and graceful at once. Now that he looked at it intently it made him think of something, but what the something was he could not for the life of him think.

Had it something to do with the matters the kids talked about? Flagg went to public school. Father had told him a few things, a few A-B-C's, but of course they were as nothing to what the kids had told him. Boys have to go through that particular "course of sprouts"; it is almost the first of life's weedings-out. Ordinarily healthy boys generally come through it, if with a few scars perhaps, not too much worse for the wear.

No, Flagg decided, it wasn't anything the kids had told him.

Then what? The set of those smooth stone shoulders, the way of those arms, suddenly magnifying nakedness.

The pucker on his forehead sprouted two long creases, rays of fright. Heat struck his face. He had caught in a flash what it was he was trying to be reminded of. Till the day he died he should remember this dim, peaked recess beneath a gable-end as the way Hell must be built.

He ran out into the main of the attic. Running did no good. He sneaked downstairs, but it followed him.

His mother looked at him. "For Heaven's sake, Flagg, what's wrong?"

"Nothing." He flushed and scowled.

When his father tried to quiz him he grew sullen and averted his eyes.

He went out by himself and walked furiously through the woods. But the Devil put White Brook there in his way, and when he saw the swimming-hole he turned and ran for home again.

He was fourteen. And he was a Beast, Beast, Beast!

He did get to sleep that night, finally. But then he woke up again, somewhere in the pit of night, and began to sweat. In his dreams he had heard a voice as big as God's and as fearful as mother's, "*Fern, put on your clothes!*"

But, no! Who was the boss of his mind, anyway? He set himself a desperate stint. In his imagination he would look straight at that statue in the attic, and he would see it as that statue, and nothing but.

It did no good. All he could see was Fern, that day on the bank of White Brook, standing, trying to pick up her clothes, covering herself with her arms, a girl, frozen, just so. Fern India! *Fern!*

How was he ever to face Fern again?

Oh, he hoped that Fern never would come home.

Sam India had been drunk twice in his life. Both times were in his college days, and both were connected with athletic events. Both were in Boston. There the likeness ended. One commemorated a victory and the other a defeat.

When his college track-team (of which he was not a member) won the New England championship at Cambridge for the first time in history, there seemed nothing for Sam and his fellows to do but to go back across the river and paint the Hub of the Universe red. The Hub could stand it. There was very little material damage done and, if a few policemen had their hands full in the small hours, that is what policemen's hands are for.

Grant India, Sam's father, come up to the meet in the double capacity of alumnus and son of the Founder, retrieved his offspring from the top of an elm on the Common, where he and three other squirrels were hiding nuts away against the winter, and piloted him back to the Adams House in the Sabbath dawn. Upon the lad's awakening, that afternoon, he gave him first a finger of brandy, then coffee, black, and lots of food. They talked about the victory of the preceding day, re-running the quarter, re-putting the shot that had told the tale. Concerning the celebration not much was said. It is true that, eyeing the battered celebrator from time to time, the elder man did purple a little and murmur something about "squirrels" in the depths of his chest. But his single overt comment was, "Christmas comes but once a year." And at parting, "Now, son, you get on back to work."

That was in Sam's junior year. In his last year, playing safety-back on his college eleven, standing under his goal-posts in that same Cambridge, he let a Harvard punt bounce out of his arms, saw a Harvard end fall on the ball behind the line, and knew he had lost single-handed a game his ten mates had all but won.

In the dressing-room they clapped his shoulders; you would have thought he had been the hero of the day. But what was the use? He escaped and got away across the Charles alone. He began in a saloon on Massachusetts Avenue, away at the dark end of the bar, his head between his hands, his elbows heavy on the wood.

When he awoke in a hotel room two days later, his father was with him again. But it was not the same father. In the elder's eye there was anger, on his face disgust. "Get up and get dressed and get out of here," he commanded, when the boy had groaned and been ill. "You swine! You bleary coward! You damned fool!"

The father had softened a little by the time they were about to part in the South Station. Sam, his head still wuzzy, was nearly in tears.

"I'm through, father. I'll never touch *that* stuff again."

"All right. That's for you to say."

"Ugh-ugh, none in mine. I'm afraid of it."

At that the elder's jaw went hard again. "Afraid!"

"But then, what's a fellow to do?"

"Certainly a fellow's not to be *afraid*. Not a son of mine."

"But then—"

Grant India passed a hand over his eye with a sudden gesture of contrition. "*Mea culpa*," he muttered. Then to his son, "Your grandfather was a better man than your father, Sam. When I was six he gave me a pony. The second time I rode the beast it shied and threw me off. It hurt me a little, but it scared me worse. Your grandmother would have put me to bed. Your grandfather took me, screaming bloody-murder as I was, put me back on that pony and made me ride it the rest of the afternoon. That much for horses.

"And then about drinking. There was a lady in the neighborhood who took the old gentleman to task for having wine on his table. She'd never have it in the house, she said, except for medicinal purposes. It was one of the few times I ever saw my father lose his temper.

"'Medicine! Poison, you mean!'

"The lady was bewildered. Father proceeded to give her thunder.

"'The one thing about drinking that is of importance, is that *it should be of no importance*. Mark that, Mrs. Applewaite!'

"He went deeper into it with me. The one formal rule of life he ever set down for me was a couplet he pencilled on the fly-leaf of the diary he gave me when I went off to college:

> Drink high, fear not:
> Drink low, die sot . . ."

For at least three generations the habit in the India house had been to serve a single wine with dinner and a thimbleful of cordial with the coffee afterwards. The decay of this habit, like the progressive looting of the house's gracious old interior, was a process so gradual as to pass, with a man of Sam India's unguarded nature, almost unremarked.

It was with the lighter table wine rather than with the heavier liqueurs, oddly enough, that the first step had to do. And it was India himself who took the step (he supposed); a point to be remembered afterwards.

Rex was nearing nine when his father said to his mother one evening, "What's the matter with the muscatel, dear?"

"Matter? I didn't know anything was. Why?"

"You haven't touched it. As a matter of fact, lately— Do you know, Anne, for a good week now you've scarcely touched your wine?"

Mother made a little face at her glass.

So father said, "I'm going to get up some of the Burgundy for a change. Why didn't you tell me you'd gone off the muscatel?"

But then, after three dinners at which mother failed even to sip at the *red* wine, father put his glass away with a gesture of impatience.

"For Heaven's sake, Anne, why, if you've lost your liking—"

"I do seem to have, Sam." Mother made the same little face at her untouched glass. Having assured herself, obliquely, that Rex's eyes were upon her, she went on to amaze her husband, "The truth is, Sam, I don't believe I ever did have much of a taste for the vinegary stuff. Do you know, I'd *much* rather have ginger-ale."

Father studied her for a moment, looking foolish.

"What I was going to say was, why, if you've lost your liking for it, do we try to have it on the table at all? Of all the dismal acts I know of, this sitting here alone—"

Mother looked straight at him, her lips thin. "Why do we, then?"

That wasn't altogether the end of it; it wants a little while to take one's own bluff seriously. But after another week or so of self-consciousness, of labored whimsicality that met none in return, and of ever-sharpening argumentation in the privacy of India's own mind, it came to him of a sudden one evening: "Good Lord! I *shall* be making this thing important before long, if I don't look out. And it's not worth it, not to me." So that night no wine was poured. The decanters, red and white, were left on the sideboard, where they could be "got at if wanted." If Anne had lost her taste for wine at dinner, certainly with all this India had lost his.

From then on the business of elimination proceeded without India's help, and almost without his knowing it. He could not have said definitely, for instance, what day or week it was when the decanters retreated from the sideboard and turned up in the open corner-cupboard. And since he was no longer interested in their whereabouts he might never have been aware of their removal from that one to the closed one in the other corner had it not been for the fact that, entering the dining room one afternoon, he found his younger son on a chair before it, peering in with an air of somber curiosity at the forms arrayed in the shadows of the upper shelf.

He even had to ask, "What have you got in there, sonny? Goblins?"

"You don't like it either, do you, father?"

"What? A goblin?" India shaded his eyes to see in through the panes. "Oh," he laughed, "those!"

"It *is* sour, isn't it, father?"

"I'll bet it is. My hat! if they've gone and left the wine in those decanters all this while—"

"It *is* bitter, father?"

"It'll be worse than bitter—"

"Worse than poison, won't it be?"

"Poison?"

"That's what mother says."

"Well, it seems to me, then, she might have—mmmmm—nothing. We'll perform the funereal rite ourselves, Rex, my son. What's the matter with this cupboard door? It sticks."

"It's locked. It's always locked. Mother keeps it."

"Where's the key?"

"I—I—I'll show you. It's in the s-s-sideboard drawer."

"Pick up your feet, old man. What do you think you're doing, herding elephants?"

"It's hidden under th-those napkins —th-th-th-there."

Carrying the decanters into the pantry father emptied their acid contents down the drain. He wrinkled his nose.

"There's the best place for *that*, Rex, my friend."

"That's what mother told Flagg and me."

When the boy had departed, the man stood bemused.

"I wonder what it's all about—this

stuff Anne seems to be filling the kids up with?"

Their coffee they had as a rule in the library, the two grown-ups, after the children had gone upstairs to their studies or their beds. For a while the ceremonial of Chartreuse or Benedictine continued to carry on. But only lamely. Only intermittently, by and by, since Anne had taken to leaving hers untasted, and India could never see the point in drinking a thing called a "cordial" all alone. In the end it was only when there was company for dinner that the little glasses came into the library with the coffee cups, an event of greater and greater importance as the months went by, and especially so after the war-time prohibition measures had gone into effect, and a man with "that kind of stuff tucked away in his cellar" had become an object of grinning envy and back-slapping admiration.

On one such occasion something happened that was new in Sam India's experience. His guests were two friends of years, one a partner and the other a subordinate in India's firm. When Anne, feeling a little tired, had excused herself, the three men sat on over their coffee cups. The maid coming at a time that should have been right to remove the tray, India made, of course, the traditional gesture, so little attentive to what he did that it seemed scarcely an interruption in the three-cornered talk about the magazine they planned to launch "when the War was over."

Denying the maid the tray for one moment with the hand of habit on it, he pronounced the formula: "A little coffee, Joe? . . . Coffee, Maynard?"

"No, thanks, Sam, no more coffee."

"Benedictine?" Already he had removed the staying hand.

"Well—Benedictine—"

"Well, when you say Benedictine, Sam, that's another matter. Eh, Joe?"

"Could do another wee drop of the tipple, Sam, yes-yes."

India filled their glasses. Then, in the nature of things, his own. He felt like winking. It was the first time in his life he had ever put down a cordial to a "Here's how!"

There came a moment in the evening when, the bottle of syrupy fire half empty, he meditated: "Here's an inexplicable thing. Why shouldn't I have saved them in my own estimation long ago by having Scotch and soda brought up? Now I'll be damned if I will, the swine! *Benedictine!* My father must be turning over and over in his grave."

India stood in the doorway when, a little hilarious, the two had left. Until to-night, for many years, he had gone along comfortably in the idea that he knew them pretty well; hard-working, likeable, companionable fellows, both.

"*Benedictine!* What incredible swine!"

A bubble of sugary, sick-sticky gas came up his gullet. He felt polluted. He smacked his mouth and said, "Blaah!"

He gloomed out into the night. Of a sudden he began to wonder about other men who were his friends. The very fact that he was wondering dismayed him.

"What's happening to everybody? What's it all coming to?"

The darkest hour had passed. The Germans' last and greatest drive on the Western Front had failed, falling short of Soissons. U-boats or no U-boats, the American divisions were on the seas. And if there was corn-meal in the cakes at the Berks School commencement hop, the lights and the hearts were bright. All the hearts but three.

Sam India's heart ought to have been bright. It's not often that a father (even a foster-father) has a daughter (even a foster-daughter) who at going-on-sixteen prefers his middle-aged society at a party to that of the prep-school brothers of the other girls.

Flagg India's heart ought to have been bright. Was it not the first school dance that had ever taken him away from home for over-night, with his first

dinner clothes packed in his first full-sized bag? Could any young man have asked to be handsomer, busier, or more variously adored? No, no.

But, "Tell Fern," he muttered in the ear of his father's that was away from the girl, "tell her," he doubled for emphasis, his hurt eyes burning pale in the dark red scowl of his dudgeon, "if she doesn't want to dance with me she doesn't *have* to."

There it was, out. And what could India do?

The least he could have done, for Flagg at any rate, was to have headed off Miss Brainard, the school matron. He should have seen by the understanding and deprecatory light on her face as she came brushing through the fronds of a paper palm behind them that she had heard the boy's outburst, and he should have clapped a hand over her mouth, for all the scandal, rather than let her let the already-crimson fellow know she had. But he was too upset himself and too slow, and Miss Brainard was sage and comforting.

"Fern's not much at dancing with anyone, Master India—not with any of the boys, that is. . . . Are you, Fern? And it's so hard to understand, Fern, for you do so splendidly in dancing-class; you do dance so prettily with Clysta Spencer. . . . I think all she needs, Mr. India, is just a little more self-confidence about—"

Fern interrupted, her face expressionless, her eyes straight ahead, "I will dance with Flagg, father, if he wants me to."

But Flagg, head in the air, was striding off for other girls. And there was India left, biting his lip to keep from crying, "Oh, twins!"

It was awful. It's foolish to say that what is done can't be undone. Facts can grow as thin as bubbles. Suddenly India knew that this Fern and this Flagg had never been "twins," never playmates, never even acquaintances.

Later, out on the lawn, under the trees hung with Japanese lanterns, he saw Fern and her roommate, Clysta Spencer, arm-in-arm at a little distance from him. The way they were watching the tall bright windows of the building, crossed by the shadows of boys and girls merrymaking, disturbed him more profoundly than he could have explained. He got a sense of something distorted, a kind of "united we stand," that somehow there ought not to have been. A completeness of concord. In their quietude, their identical pallor, their mutual defense, defiance, and disdain. It made him want to bellow, "Go straight on in there, you fools, and get yourselves beaus!"

He called Fern's name. As he walked forward, Clysta left her alone to await him and vanished eerily in the criss-cross light.

"What is it, father?"

"Ah, Fern, old thing!"

He started to fling an arm around her shoulders. Whether or not it was something she did with her neck he could never say; all he knew was that when his arm touched her it failed to "stick," slid off of its own weight, and hung down again by his side.

It confused and embarrassed him and made him stand away as sharply as a how-dare-you-sir might have done. It made him open his eyes. He looked at Fern as a person-of-her-own for the first time ever.

She might have been a slender eighteen, for she was tall for her age. India had remembered her all these absent seasons as a thing of beauty, and now he saw her a thing of beauty, but not of the kind of beauty with which his fond and purblind inner eye had continued to invest her as she grew up in absence. Where he had taken for granted health, there was no health. Chalky white, dark-slashed of lips and eyes, the red of her hair as deep as the lees of black wine, it was in no grace of harmony or symmetry that her attraction lay, but rather in contrast, conflict, rather in the oppressive and half-morbid challenge of her glittering apathy.

"Well," said India, stumbling about among his words. "Another term gone, eh? Only one more year here, daughter. Then where?"

"Why do you call me 'daughter'?"

Because he was staggered India made first to pass it over. "Have you thought at all what college you'd like? Smith? Vassar?" But then, gone to pieces, he tried again to throw a rough arm around her, and again it failed to "stick," tumbled down, and hung at his side. "Why do I call you—call you—'*daughter*'?"

"Why do I call you and mother 'father' and 'mother'?"

"Fern, wherever have you managed to pick up this crazy—"

Fern continued to stare, unshaken, at the windows.

"I suppose it's because I've been a coward I've gone on calling you my parents. Because, you see, if you weren't, then how could I live?"

"How could *we* live?"

He hadn't realized even yet how pitilessly ready she was to smash that sort of thing.

"I mean, how could I *live?* How could I eat? What could I dress in? Where could I sleep? Who would there be to pay my bills?"

"Stop it, Fern. Straight off!"

"Unless we could keep on making believe you were my parents, why should you have to worry about me? It isn't as if I were any good to you. It's not as if the money you had to spend keeping me farmed out year after year—"

"Fern, stop! Money! Why, foolish child—"

"No, I'm not foolish and I'm not a child. Don't you suppose I know how much money it takes? Don't you suppose we've figured it out, every horrid cent of it, Clysta and I? Don't you suppose I know to the dollar what it would have cost at that camp in Maine this coming summer—the one you sent me the catalogue of?"

"You're not going there."

"I know I'm not going there."

"Do you know where you're going this summer, Fern?" This time India's arm "stuck." If Fern had been in a wincing mood it would have made her wince, it caught her shoulders in so heavy a grip. "Do you know where you're spending this summer, Fern India? By God! you're spending it at home."

"No, I am not. That would be a queer thing to do, wouldn't it? I'm no more Flagg's sister now than I was six years ago; not half so much. If I was a bad thing for—a worry—you know what I mean—then, when I was only a child and Flagg was not yet ten years old, why, now—"

"*Flagg!*"

The girl might have laughed to see his face. She did laugh under his arm, thinly, shaking her shoulders in a bitter humor. But it was not at India with his hanging jaw.

"It is funny, isn't it? Me, a worry, that way. Because I hate boys. I detest and loathe them. They disgust me, just as they do Clysta. I'd rather have a toad touch me, far. I know a few things about boys. They're nasty, and I hate nastiness. They're a million times as nasty, what they think and do, as girls." A shiver of amusement. "To imagine *me* a danger for *Flagg*."

India made an effort to speak clearly and slowly.

"You're all wrong, Fern. Will you believe me when I tell you you've been making up a lot of things in your mind that are so far from the truth they would be funny if they weren't such a mess? The time has come now when I can tell you what it's all about. You're old enough—"

"I'm afraid I'm much too old. I'm old enough now to know that if you make up long enough, and hard enough, and honest enough, you'll end by making up the truth. There was a while when I would have been as glad as anything if you'd told me that two plus two made five."

"That settles it. This summer, home!"

"'Home'? . . . Forgive me, I didn't want to say it that way. I do thank you, and mother. I am grateful. Perhaps some day I can show you. But I've decided. I'm not going to be in school another year; that's what I'm trying to tell you. Clysta has invited me up home with her for a little while now, and I'm going. Then she and I are going to start out on our own. We can both say we're eighteen and get away with it, and they're looking everywhere for girls for the munition factories. And once I'm working—once I feel that I'm—"

"Fern, are you trying to rag your father, who adores you? You heard what I said a moment ago. You're spending this summer with us at home."

"I've told you."

"But you see, my funny darling, you can't tell *me* you're eighteen. And so, seriously, I've still some right to say what and where you—"

"Try!"

India looked at her, who had all this while not looked once at him.

"Why, Fern India!"

He laughed. He lifted the hand that was on her farther shoulder to give her a gentle whack. But once dislodged his arm had lost the power of "sticking." For the third time it slithered down and hung from his shoulder, dead. He felt queer.

"Let's walk around a bit."

Fern acquiesced, falling in step without a word.

The school grounds seemed enormous. Wherever there were trees there were hundreds of paper lanterns, dozens of colors. It was like walking through so many crazy-work quilts. Now the Gym, with its smothered music and rectangular yellow eyes, was here; now, sliding around under cover of the foliage, it turned up over there. A flower-bed was made in the shape of a star, full of pansies. When India passed it for the fourth time he realized why it was he was getting nowhere. He and Fern were walking in circles.

"Daughter," he said, coming to a stand, "I'm tired to-night. I wonder if anyone would mind if I escaped. Tell Flagg, when you see him, that he'll have to get back to the hotel by himself. I'll humble myself before the powers in the morning; I'm sure it will be all right."

"You had a coat."

"I'll pick it up to-morrow, when we come for you."

He waited a moment.

"About ten or ten-thirty, Fern, in the morning. If you'll have your duds ready to be taken then. Our train's at eleven-twenty-five."

Still the girl said nothing.

He had never left her without kissing her before.

Those gates! He had learned to hate those gates. Peeping back when he was almost up to them he saw that Fern had not moved from her place beside the star-shaped pansy bed. But in the mixed light of the lanterns, like a wraith, Clysta Spencer had reappeared.

When, at half past ten next morning, after dodging about for ten minutes in the confusion of the school's exodus, India was told that his daughter had left with Miss Spencer on the "nine-two" for the north, his first thought was for Flagg. Letting nothing happen to his face but a pout of unimportant surprise, he said as he piloted the mystified boy away, "So she changed her mind back again, after all. Her roommate wanted her over the week-end, and I said she might go, but last night I thought she had definitely decided not to— Hullo, there, taxi! What the devil! Don't forget you're ours. . . . Come on, sonny, move your feet."

To himself, settled in the car for the station, he said, "I must telegraph, immediately." He was thoroughly dazed. It was only after hundreds of yards that the thought came to him, "But I don't even know where this Clysta person lives." And next, "Then too, I mustn't let Flagg see me wiring." And finally, at the station, "There's all

the time in the world. Take it easy, old man. Don't even try to do anything until you get home."

And all the while, deep down cold in the bottom of his heart, the certainty was growing: "What's the use?" It was like the on-creeping of paralysis. "What real right have I?" But it was more than the moral question of right; it was a question of might. He remembered Fern standing there on the lawn last night, suddenly adult, unshakable, untouchable, saying, "Try!"

He knew already that he would not try. Fern was gone.

Anne was gone too. And as for Rex . . .

The train rolled down through the windings of the hills, a less-than-second-rate train, jolting, rattling. The coach was dusty and overcrowded with people and flies. Soldiers, dull young drafts returning to their camps, took turns in going to the toilet. Reappearing, each time, their eyes were redder and their feet clumsier, for the bottles hidden in the bulges of their tunics they would presently have to throw away, and they wanted to make the best of what time they had. Flagg looked out of the window.

It was a queer place (or was it?) for Rip Van Winkle to wake up.

Sam Henry India, 3d, he was a fortunate man. He lived at peace in the house of his fathers. On the woman he loved he had begotten children to live in peace there when he was gone. He had made of himself five, and each of the five was five, and altogether they made one, and the one was proud. Proud of its past, proud of its present, proud of its home, spacious and gracious and strong, proud of the friendship of its encircling friends. And brave, too. Let the years come. Let them, when they were ripened, fall, one by one. Bud and flower and green fruit there would always be on that tree.

Sam India, the dreamer, rubbed his eyes open in the bad air of the day-coach. He moved his limbs and groaned. Robbed and beaten and left alone. How long since?

Fern was gone. How long since? Years.

Anne, his wife, was gone. When he faced it, how long was it since they had last touched hands, really? Years and years.

Rex? Rex, he knew, had never been.

The house of his fathers?

The friendship of his friends? He counted them over, his sight cleared and his heart sinking. He wondered if it was because they had seen what was befalling him as he had not. He remembered Joe Coffin and Maynard Wills and the Benedictine. He wondered bitterly if it's not until rats begin to leave the sinking ship that you can see that they're rats.

One minute a rich man. Another, disinherited, stripped, cast out in the world, aimless, all alone.

He had not forgotten Flagg, there beside him. He'd been saving him, that's all. A straw. Flagg was not gone.

He looked around covertly at the boy. He saw what he had never seen before, that the reason Flagg was still his was that of them all Flagg alone was an India. Flagg was he. The same hair, same eyes, same way of carrying himself, good-natured and a fool for faith.

A man will fight for his life. It came to India that this boy was more than his life; he was his immortality. And now, something rising in him that had never been there before, savage, bludgeoning, pitiless, high and happy, he knew that he would fight.

"Flagg!" he cried.

The boy gave a jump and studied him obliquely, eyes wide.

That was no way to go about it. Gently, cunningly. No need of dramatics. They were too much alike, these two. They had always been too close, father and son, to need the spoken word.

"Flagg, there's no diner on, is there? I could eat."

"No, father, I looked, and there's none."

After that for a long while nothing was said. India sat tight. He felt curiously peeled-down, cool, renewed, alert, square-shouldered. Even though he had never been willing to realize it, it was good to feel at last that there was nothing behind his back but a wall.

Flagg was the first to speak, as they were getting down into the flatter land toward home. One of the soldiers, far gone, was coming back from his swigging in the toilet. Lurching, he caught at India's shoulder.

Flagg whirled at him. "You dirty dog!"

Here was something Flagg had, then, that India had never known. It blew over him like a chill little wind. He wagged his head, looking after the retreating drunk. "Poor fellow! Poor kid!"

"Poor! It's his own fault, father. If he wants to be a dog, a pig!"

India sat still.

"Anybody that wants to drink, father, is a pig. And a fool, too. If only they knew what they looked like inside—what that poison does to their stomachs—all red and warts and boils."

"Who told you that, son?"

"Why, everybody knows it. It's in my physiology book at school, the pictures. And mother says it's so."

"Says it to you? Or just to Rex?"

"Why, to both. What's the difference?"

"Flagg, take a good look at me. Do I look as though I had warts and boils on the lining of my stomach?"

"Well—no—" The boy's face reddened. His eyes went to his knees. He had been caught, and his embarrassment made him sulk. "No, I don't—I don't think so. But then—you quit drinking, you see."

"I—*quit drinking?*"

It was awful, but Flagg was in for it now.

"Why, yes, you did, father. When mother wanted you to."

Then, "Father!" And there was Flagg, Flagg now, examining him with a fearful doubt. "Father, you *have* stopped drinking, haven't you? Rex *is* all off, isn't he? You don't—he's just pipe-dreaming when he tries to make out you're having liquor and things in there, after we're upstairs. In the library, I mean, with your coffee. When men come."

India put his knuckles into his eyes. Flagg now. Flagg, too. And he said to himself, as his father had once said, "*Mea culpa!*"

"Son," he said, "I wonder if you would do something for me. I wonder if, when we get home this afternoon, you'd sit down and have a good, long, lazy jaw with me, about almost anything—baseball, U-boats, elephants, whatever you feel like—over a good glass of beer?"

"Like—Boches?"

Tears of sweat prickled out on India's temples.

"Of sauterne, then. That's wine, and French."

It was awfuller than ever, but worse than ever Flagg was in for it.

"No, I won't. Why, father!" The revulsion, sweeping him back to relief, was pathetic. A painful grin. An imploring chuckle. "Huh! Don't you suppose I know you're just trying to string me along? Huh-huh!"

India sat and stared at the dirty plush of the seat before him, fascinated by his own helplessness. Flagg grew earnest again.

"But, father, no fooling. Why, when you've given it up, do you have to keep that stuff in the house still? I don't see. Miss Farley—she's our physiology teacher—she says she supposes it must be for medical purposes. But Gosh, all *that!* I couldn't swallow that hardly any more'n I could the way mother got out of it."

"What did your mother say?"

"Well, she said—I suppose she thought she had to—but she told us there wasn't any down there any more. She said that place in the cellar was all empty, because you'd thrown it all away. But—only—only you see, Rex and I

knew different. You see, we—we were down there a couple—well—several times. You see, we found out where the key was kept—"

"You mean Rex found out where the key was kept. Don't you, Flagg?"

"—the key was kept, and so we went down and opened the door—"

"Why?"

"Oh, to look. Just because we— Oh, just for the devil of it, I guess. Only, father, once, we did something. We took something."

"A drink?"

"*No!* We took a—a—a bottle—of something."

"Rex took it?"

"We took it and carried it out, and we buried it, up behind the old dog-kennel. We dug a hole and buried it. We put a big rock on top of it. It—it's there still."

The brakes were squealing for the yards at Stonebridge. India went along the aisle. He felt as if he would like to touch the shoulders of the people in the seats he passed, as that tipsy soldier had done. It was not until he and Flagg were waiting in the vestibule for the full stop that he remembered he was a mutineer. He was going at last to fight.

To Be Continued

THE THRESHOLD

BY MARY DIXON THAYER

WITH what strange unexpectedness shall we—
Around some curve in life's familiar places—
Confront the portals of eternity,
The two angels with impassive faces!
And one will say, "Turn not, O soul, to gaze
Back through the twisted years that you have trod!
Here endeth time. Here is the end of days.
And there is naught beyond—but only God."
Then shall the sweetness of the world grow dim
As fading music on a summer's night,
And the great doors shall open into Him
As a rose opens, softly, into light. . . .
We shall go on, through a bright rush of wings,
And voices chanting sudden, starry things.

A SABBATICAL YEAR FOR MARRIAGE

BY SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS

WHOSOEVER impugns any of our popular institutions, such as baseball or marriage, with the suggestion that all is not well with it, is at once stigmatized as a jaundiced critic. This is the modern equivalent of having the cry of "Heretic" raised against one and condemns the accused to the fires of public contempt. Intrepid spirits, notwithstanding, have been roused to point out defects in our national sport; and however it may grieve the judicious, there is evident a growing tendency to question whether the ancient and honorable estate of matrimony measures up to the declarations of the "Lived-Happy-Ever-After" romanticists. Strange to relate, it seems to be the young and marriageable who are doing most of the doubting.

Without necessarily assuming that marriage is a failure, it may reasonably be postulated that the institution is not in a state of such health as its well-wishers, religious and social, might desire. Too many of the churchly are prone to impose marriage upon a perverse and stiff-necked generation precisely as it is, for better or worse, on the principle, apparently, that what can't be cured must be endured. Something is awry with that proverb in this application. We are, as a nation, enduring wedlock very ill. Out of every eight marriages one is legally dissolved—a ratio which indicates anything but a spirit of passive acceptance. A mortality of twelve and a half per cent is considerably higher than that of smallpox or typhoid. Nor does this figure take into account those failures and dissolutions which, for one reason or another, never come into court.

Divorce we have always with us as a solution. But as divorce is usually followed by another marriage, it would appear to be less a cure than a condition precedent to relapse. Or it may be regarded as a tacit admission on the part of the re-marriers that they, not the institution, are at fault. Certainly a second trial should represent not the triumph of hope over experience but the victory of experience over error. Data on this point are unfortunately lacking. If matrimony is to be salvaged at all, however, in the interests of economy and convenience it might better be at the first than at the second trial.

Now I have no nostrum or cure-all to vend. My modest suggestion is merely a palliative; or if that be regarded as a term of opprobrious implications, a preventive; or, even better, a preservative. It is the simple, old, and well-tested expedient of a vacation at stated intervals, such as all colleges and many progressive business institutions now include in their regime, a sort of sabbatical year or month or fortnight. Conceive of a state of society wherein the marriage agreement should contain without public scandal, a clause to this effect:

"In and after the second year of the joint life of the contracting parties, they shall, circumstances permitting, separate for a period of not less than . . . weeks nor more than . . . months, during which time each shall honestly endeavor to reconstitute his or her own individuality."

This would be to let air in upon the congested status of married existence. It is presaged upon a diagnosis of what is wrong with marriage. Timorously, I venture the theory that ninety per cent of the trouble with matrimony lies in its being too close a corporation. Certainly it is the closest corporation known to society, modern or ancient. One cannot find that this inheres in the institution itself, or even in the rules and formulæ with which it has become encrusted. I have studied all the forms on which I could lay hand, and in none do I discover any such undertaking as is tacitly read into the compact by so many love-blinded and over-proprietary absolutists, to wit: "I hereby agree to live with this man (or woman) day in and day out, to share his quarters, his meals, his amusements, his vacations, his friendships, his goings-out and his comings-in, world-without-let-up, Amen."

That is simply an exchange into mutual slavery. It would seem to derive from a belief that by the sacrifice of two individualities a joint-personality can be achieved, a theory more in consonance with medieval alchemy than with modern thought and habit. Yet it is, I believe, the basis upon which most marriages are made. Small wonder that so many fail to survive the deadly compression. I once heard a famous bishop say, "A divorce usually represents a marriage that has been smothered to death."

II

It will doubtless be pointed out that the home life of to-day is less closely knit than that of our grandparents. Wrong. Fifty years ago a home was a three-dimensional entity. There is important social and psychological significance to the fact that the house commonly boasted two or more floors, plus a garret, plus a cellar, not to mention the yard. Those different levels represented for the housewife the blessed possibility of privacy, of escape, if you will. To-day, married life, particularly in the early and vitally important period of adjustment, is hardly more than one-dimensional. It is lived on a single floor, usually a narrow one. A "flat," expressing the *modus vivendi* of so many newly-weds, is a term of sinister suggestiveness. The companion adjectives, "stale and unprofitable," are all too likely to occur in time to the pent-in partners.

For purposes of clarity in the present inquiry, let us set aside religious and legal considerations for the moment and regard the husband-and-wife relation merely as a social partnership to be preserved if possible. In this light it becomes comparable to other partnerships in business and the professions, and it is at once apparent that no other associations are ever maintained upon such unrelentingly close terms. Imagine two business associates agreeing, as a condition to the continuance of their enterprise, that they would breakfast and dine together daily, spend their evenings in common, take their vacations at the same time and place, go to the same plays, concerts, church services, sports. How long would that association last?

Two young Englishmen were once brought to my quarters in Caracas for cocktails. They owned and operated a small asphalt lake back from the coast, where for months on end they had no associates but themselves and the peons who worked the plant, and whence, twice a year, they made a day's journey on mule-back, followed by a trip of uncertain duration in a tiny Saba-built schooner, to taste the delights of civilization and hear a week of grand opera. Knowing that distaste—sometimes dully smouldering, sometimes dangerously active—which such enforced companionship breeds, particularly in the tropics, I was surprised to find in the partners an attitude of almost boyish camaraderie, eventually explained by one of them.

Each had built himself a cottage, at the far ends of the property. There he slept and ate. Once a day they met in the small central shack which served as an

office, to discuss and plan. Twice a week and on special holidays they invited each other to dine. Otherwise they met only by accident, nodded, and passed on. In nearly four years they had never had a quarrel. That is, I believe, a record for marooned whites in the Caribbean wilds. When those men marry they will, I venture to prophesy, make a success of it, though the brides may not escape some measure of that "any amazement" against which the English service forewarns them.

Nowhere has any scientific study been devoted—certainly the subject has been ignored in marriage—to the terrible mutual attrition of one personality upon another personality. In some fortunate instances, undoubtedly, it does wear characters smooth, so that marriage becomes the Ship That Found Herself, with minor discrepancies adjusted and friction reduced to a minimum. But in others it may produce an irritation which in time becomes malignant and poisons the whole system. Engineers recognize that even the finest tempered metal suffers under continuance of operation. An engine operated twenty-four hours a day, week in and week out, will last only half as many working hours as another which operates with daily respites. A human soul is a mechanism with infinite capacity for getting out of order; and two human souls, more or less combined, exhibit not twice that unpromising capacity, but two hundred times!

Why not give to marriage a set vacation, a definite temporary separation from bed, board, and conversation (particularly conversation!) once in so often? The ever-startled moralist will scent depravity. The more timid and apprehensive among womankind, a rapidly vanishing tribe, may suspect the siren presence of the hetaira, the Other Woman, lurking somewhere in the background. But these are merely vestigial survivals of the ancient and puritanical conviction of sin in the other fellow, on the theory that the logical alternative to monotony is infidelity. There is nothing repugnant to morality in this proposal; and it might well keep life from wearing threadbare.

The vacation scheme is neither revolutionary nor new. Who shall say that the motivating influence behind the Crusades was not, in truth, the salutary feeling that it was a good thing for families to be separated for a time and thus learn the better to appreciate each other? Certainly the women of those days evinced a willingness to dispense with the companionship of their lords and masters which may have been as much the outcome of weariness as of piety. Certainly, also, these and similar pilgrimages occurred at suspiciously frequent intervals, and the leaders had small difficulty in recruiting sufficient forces from all ranks of society. No one impugns the virtue of the absentee husbands or the abnegating wives; in those enlightened days they did not believe that a break in the routine of the home presupposed ambitions toward profligacy. There was also another kind of retreat undertaken by those (men or women) eager for progeny, which should commend itself to the propagandists of anti-race-suicide and which has a bearing on the present subject under consideration in that it supports the truth of the proverb: "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

Alas that these quests have passed! How much benefit would a brisk, long-distance crusade confer upon the tottering modern home! Of course there was the great crusade of ten years ago, the World War. Humanitarians approve heartily the distinction made by our government in favor and protection of married men. Sociologists are not so sure about it. In fact I have encountered a number who believe that, if the reverse system had been tried, the disconcerting increase of divorce in the post-war years would not have manifested itself. It is at least worth considering that, in the medieval crusades, more married than unmarried men seem to have gone.

The modern pilgrimage is to a sanitarium. Often it serves the purpose which I have suggested as being present in the Crusades, although that purpose is carefully concealed from the pilgrims who believe that they are kneeling at the shrine of health. The medical fraternity, particularly the neurologists and psychiatrists who have to deal largely with personal interrelations and frictions, understand it. In one respect it is superior to the old crusade: it is open to women as well as men. Twenty years ago the pioneer in this field told me of his big idea, when he was still in process of financing it.

"I am going to build a retreat for the married where wives can get away from husbands and husbands from wives."

"Nobody will go to it," I warned him. "You will be regarded as an enemy to society and a threat to the sanctity of the home."

"Not at all. I shall call it a sanitarium. That will take the curse off. They'll flock to it. I'm going to save the home, not wreck it."

The place is now famous as a "rest cure." Others of the same kind have sprung up in various parts of the country. Any diagnosis is sufficient for the patient (except the correct one); depleted nerves, low vitality, anæmia, overwork, under-nourishment. The desideratum is to separate temporarily and without heart-burnings two people who have rubbed raw upon each other, and give them time to reconstitute their own threatened individualities. It is a boon to the understanding practitioner who otherwise would be hard put to it to find a pretext for such a division of families.

"If I tell the plain facts to a husband and wife," explained a distinguished neurologist who had just sent a friend of mine to this institution, "if I say to them, 'You live too much and too close together. You are on each other's nerves and in time you will become calloused and coarsened toward each other,' they would consider themselves insulted by my brutality. I used to prescribe vacations; but the husband would say, 'I'll quit business and go along to look after the little woman,' or the wife would protest, 'I couldn't *think* of letting John go alone when he isn't well.' And that was the end of that. So now I prescribe for him or her a sanitarium where the condition is made that all outside associations be cut off."

And the head of the concern boasted to me, not without justification, that he had prevented the breaking up of more households than any other man in America. "I'm the family doctor who cures the ailment most fatal to the family." He added a word of wisdom. "People will not understand that habitude may become the worst of corrosives."

III

How would the beneficiaries—or victims, as they might deem themselves—of this system take it? I once had the enlightening experience of trying out the idea on a large group of potentially interested subjects. The occasion was a lecture which I had given before a women's club in an inland city. After the formal discussion was over an official of the organization asked me if I could not suggest "a lively topic" for the club itself to consider at a future meeting. Somewhat, I must admit, in a spirit of trouble-stirring, I proffered:

"Why not a sabbatical year for married couples?"

There was a brief silence while the idea sank. Then the ripples began to wash in from troubled waters.

"Do you mean," inquired a sweetly formidable voice, "that we are to let our husbands leave us for a year, once in so often?" (There was much significance in that "let.")

Some kindly soul came to my defense: "Well, we asked him for a *lively* topic."

"Year was just a term of convenience," I explained. "A much shorter period might serve the purpose—the time to be suited to the circumstances."

"What is the purpose?" a fair Incognita caught me up.

"To salvage marriage." It was the best I could do offhand.

"Does marriage need salvaging?"

A volunteer answered for me by saying, "How many divorces have we had right here in our own set in the last few years?"

"And how many more that are near-divorces, or ought-to-be-divorces?"

Obviously the impression was that there were too many. The case was made for me, in part. A troubled and earnest young voice queried:

"How do we know that they'd come back?"—to be countered by a prompt and rebellious:

"How do *they* know that *we'd* come back?"

"Exactly. The plan is workable for wives as well as husbands."

From a corner rose a gust of quick laughter, the cause, as reported later, being the artless remark of a bride: "Bert is *so* attractive, and women are so tricky, even one's friends."

"It is interesting, but isn't it a little immoral?" inquired a woman of doubtful age.

"Meaning that it would be more interesting if immoral?" (A catty soul, that one.)

"Morality need not enter into it," I explained. "I am suggesting it as a measure of expediency to keep the closest of all fellowships from the taint of spiritual monotony."

"Just as the sabbatical year in colleges preserves the teacher from professional monotony." This from a professor's wife.

"It all comes down," pronounced a decisive little woman, "to whether we can trust our men away from us."

"Or ourselves away from our men." The rebel supplied the antithesis.

Said one of the unmarried girls, "I don't want a dachs-husband. They look so silly on the leash."

"If we didn't come back from the separation caring more than before, the plan would be a failure, wouldn't it?" asked an unidentified thinker.

"I should say that it was the marriage that would be a failure."

"Who wants to be brought face to face with one's failures?" murmured a quietist philosopher.

"Aren't some failures worth preserving?" There was wisdom in that.

"Aren't some risks worth taking?"

"If it's done, it's done," asserted a downright soul. "I mean, marrying. And the fewer chances you take, the better."

"How many marriages do you know," I ventured, "that would be wrecked by a six-months absence?"

At this there was a general murmur, which seemed to be made up of dissentient opinions.

"More than are imperilled by years of unrelieved presence?"

Someone kindly offered the statement that she'd never thought of that. Another said:

"Just the same, it's a startling idea."

The presiding officer agreed that it was startling but thought that there was no logical reason why it should be. "If it was divorce that we were discussing, nobody would think anything of it. But because this is a question of temporary separation instead of permanent, our moral fiber begins to quiver like jelly."

"Only because the proposition is new," I hastened to say. "There needn't be a pang of conscience in a barrel of it."

A judge's wife said, "I'm going to suggest to my husband that when the next batch of applicants for divorce comes up, he advise them to take a year's vacation from each other and then come back and report. (I should like to hear those reports, if they are ever made.)

IV

Society has determined—rightly, we may assume—for its own stability and convenience in the present state of civilization that the marital relationship

should be assumed to be permanent. Sentiment, going farther along the same track, says, "It must be eternal or it must not be at all." Even accepting this positivist view, in order to be eternal must it necessarily be continuous and unrelieved? Rather is not the reverse true? One of the inescapable facts of our imperfect life is that at some period all human contacts grow stale. There was never yet a combination of personalities so perfect but that, sooner or later, it needed a change of air to keep it fresh and sweet.

Stevenson has observed that the marriages of seafaring men are usually the most lasting, attributing it to the enforced separation. "The Lion," he remarks *à propos* of the emotion of love, "is the King of Beasts, but he is scarcely suitable for a domestic pet."

One of the most successful ménages that I know has for seventeen out of twenty years of its existence divided once annually. The first year of that union was delirious, the second stormy, and the third passed into that most dangerous of all phases, the doldrums. Two wise and frank young minds set themselves to the readjustment and decided upon absence as the solution. It was agreed that at least three weeks out of every year should be spent apart with only necessary communication, and this was adhered to courageously, though not without early misgivings and later disinclinations. Of those people I heard an old lady say with wonder, "Their marriage is like a house through which a spring wind is always blowing." And that was eighteen years later.

To Mr. X, a colleague of the sagacious husband, the plan seemed pagan, subversive and probably immoral. He, himself, was one of those one hundred per cent husbands. He boasted that for twenty-five years he and his wife had never been parted for twenty-four hours. I knew the wife, a little, absorbed midget of a woman, not so much dispirited as de-spirited. She asserted herself publicly for the first time when they took her away to the asylum on her twenty-seventh wedding anniversary.

"Thank God for my deafness!" she kept repeating. (She was no more deaf than I am.) "I'll never have to hear that kind voice again!"

There was the case of Mr. and Mrs. A., young married people who settled in a considerable city, and proceeded to live a life "world-forgetting, by the world forgot." For nearly five years, evening after evening, their silhouettes could be seen on the drawn shades of their library, as they sat together and presumably contented. An idyll of the busy city. Then they woke up. They found themselves drained of novelty, of emotion, of interest. All the glow had been rubbed from life by the long-maintained closeness of that contact. They have never got it back. Both are decorous members of a conventional circle. There will be no divorce. There will be nothing but a sterile existence, "stretching long and straight and dusty to the grave," in a vista of blank and helpless boredom.

Genteel poverty was the determining factor in the case of the B.'s. They had a position to maintain and, with three children, some difficulty in maintaining it. Life, in their small house, was pretty compressed. Unlike the A.'s, Mr. and Mrs. B. never showed any signs of being bored with each other; romance had kept pace with them; they were keenly intelligent people, keenly interested in the same things, and their zest in their mutual concerns had survived nearly twenty years of married life, in which time they had never been separated for a week. Mrs. B. was about forty when, driving on a remote country road one day, I saw her sitting under a tree. She looked haunted and wary, like a creature fugitive from some imminent dread. I offered a lift. To my surprise, for we had been friends for years, she snapped out an irritated "no." Fearful lest something might be wrong, I insisted, until she turned on me with a daunting and suppressed fury.

"For God's sake, let me *alone!* Don't you know that I haven't been alone for years?"

A week later she stabbed her husband with a pen-knife as he sat writing in her room. The wound was not serious.

"Insane?" I asked the head of the sanitarium where she went.

"No more than you are."

"I don't stick pen-knives into family necks," I pointed out.

"You might if you had been kept in close confinement for twenty years. Hysteria is not insanity."

I recalled her passionate outbreak to me. "Do you mean that Ed has been a jailer to her?"

"Not Ed. Circumstances." He gave me an outline of her life: twenty years of domestic crowdedness; always at call; never out of the reach of concern for husband (who was not strong) or children; without a corner in her own house where she could be secure against human intrusiveness for half an hour at a time.

"The woman is dying for want of privacy."

But at the end of three months she was back, the sane and happy wife and mother, with this reservation only, that once a year, up to the time of her death, she quietly dropped out of the current and disappeared for a fortnight to taste the unutterable luxury of being alone.

More tragic was the case of Professor L., a man of eminence in the scientific world, who married a woman beautiful, rich, affectionate—and smothering. Her conception of the whole duty of wifehood was to be continually at her husband's side. Day after day, year after year she would finish her household and social duties as soon as possible so that she might sit with him in his laboratory and interrupt his work with the questions and comments of a dutifully interested but quite unintelligent mind. Slowly and surely she wore his spirit down. But for his genuine affection for her he might have saved himself by some preservative movement of necessary brutality. "Overwork," she sympathetically explained to their friends when he went to a sanitarium, and she went with him. From that moment he was doomed. He died quickly; there were whispers of suicide, unfounded. Not that it mattered so much. His whole married life had been one protracted suicide.

Marriages may be made in heaven, they have to be maintained on earth. Something is destined to be done about the present status. We are not even muddling through the problem, and our sociological Best Minds are either cautiously silent or hopelessly divided. The older generation discards matrimony at convenience ("progressive polygamy," some stern churchman has termed it), the younger regards it with a dubious if not derisive eye as an experiment or an adventure. Religion thunders, "Thou shalt not," and those whom the church has joined together eventually, with a measure of good will and mutual concession, put themselves asunder. Law imposes its proscriptions and penalties and the courts are more overpressed year by year with the rush of the sundering applicants.

For the sabbatical vacation no claim is advanced other than that it might give marriage in general a better chance of survival. Granted that it would definitely end a number of unions. Darby would never come back from that fishing trip, or Joan would next be heard of from a round-the-world-in-two-years tour; these are the fragile combinations. We may fairly ask whether they were worth preserving in any case. Would not an equal or greater number of imperilled but still salvable unions be saved? The leave-of-absence would keep a happy fellowship keen and vivified; it might well, by affording surcease of friction, render a maladjusted combination endurable, and so durable. At worst, if the temporary separation becomes permanent, it is better that a marriage end by a clean severance than be slowly stifled to death through years of intolerable contact.

Why not let in a breath of fresh air?

THE CUCKOO

A STORY

BY ANTHONY RICHARDSON

DOWN amidst the thickets of the lower slopes the cuckoo called. Rain had fallen, and the rich green of the park lands sparkled. A few drops still pattered upon the young leaves as the fringe of the cloud passed over the house. As yet the note was neither monotonous nor too incessant. The voice in the trees of the dell continued.

There was a long drive across the park, winding through the elms, and at the end of the drive, a solid gray mansion. There were several deer in the park, and here and there small trees were encircled by their own especial railings. Behind the house rose the blue shape of Surrey hills. The drive led boldly to the front of the house, curved round to the back. It was a very obvious kind of drive, disguised neither by shrubs nor banks. There were not many flowers in the beds of the lawn. At the western end of the house was a large conservatory. Sunlight reappearing set the glass roof glittering.

The moment you were inside the gates and in full view of the house and its grounds you would have known that this was no countryseat, private and personal. The drive contained weeds, the deer were ineffectual, there was a shoddiness perceptible even at that distance. Nor would you have supposed this to be a hotel. There was no lettering upon the walls, no sign of visitors nor hint of uniformed commissioner at the front door. People often peered in through the gates and wondered who lived in Brackley Hall.

There is no sadder sight than that of a noble house fallen not to decay but to misuse. Not even April nor the cuckoo could bring much gaiety to the Hall. "I serve a purpose," the house might have said, "and though I do not approve, that is, I suppose, something."

Now on this sun-and-rain afternoon a woman stood watching the house. She rested with hands upon her umbrella, for she was a fat woman and walking always left her out of breath. She wore a blue coat and skirt and a black felt hat. The coat was wrinkled across the back, and two pads of flesh bulged behind her arm-pits. She had a large round face, heavily powdered, a small inconsequential nose, and a very small mouth. Her hair had once been sandy; now it was a gray-straw color. Her eyes were as pale as her hair, large, glassy, stupid-looking eyes. There was no light within them. You would have said she was over fifty.

She breathed quickly and audibly and she turned her head from side to side as if she must turn her head and not her eyes to see what she wanted to see. But there was nothing placid about her. Her size alone made her formidable. When she began to walk on once more her movements were deliberate and ponderous. She looked as if she would have crashed anything in her way. The deer scampered away from her and she said, "Shoo." She had no use for deer nor such like. There was only one thing in the world important to Mrs. Mortimer and that was Mrs. Mortimer.

That she recognized such to be the case only added to her power.

But when the deer had gone she kept her eyes fixed on the house. And in the conservatory of the house a pair of eyes was fixed on her, little black eyes, unwinking, a little malevolent, suspicious.

Somebody new was coming to the Hall, and Mrs. Justine, in the wicker chair in the corner of the conservatory, was trying to size her up. Every morning and every afternoon Mrs. Justine sat here. There was no better place to watch the drive and see who came. If they walked it gave you a good five minutes in which to observe them; if they came by car you could take them in as they alighted. You had the advantage of them all the time. And after as many years of experience as Mrs. Justine's, you could generally decide what line to take. In some way all newcomers must pay their homage.

She sucked an orange as she watched. She liked oranges because they relieved her throat. For so small a woman she ate many oranges. Her skin shared their yellowness.

As her small teeth bit into the pulp she thought rapidly. "Much too fat. And she looks nosey. What's she come here for? Dropsy. No, she wouldn't be walking. Heart? That's it, heart. Always the way with fat women. I wonder where they'll put her. Or it may be nerves. That's very likely. She won't be here long."

She pushed out a pip with her tongue.

"Oranges at this time of year are very sour," she said. "Of course he would buy the cheap ones."

Then she looked round cautiously to see if there was anyone in the drawing-room behind her who might have overheard. Not that she'd care much if they did. She was the only real resident in the Hall and had her rights: the wicker chair in the conservatory and homage. All others were merely birds of passage, come one day, gone the next.

A scrunching of gravel and a movement to her left told her that the Housekeeper had gone to the door to greet the newcomer. She placed the orange on the rails of the conservatory and listened.

"Mrs. Mortimer, is it?"

"I am Mrs. Mortimer."

What a soft, full, throaty voice!

"We were expecting you, of course."

"My luggage will follow within the hour."

Luggage! Well, it might be only a handbag or portmanteau, or rather a basket affair with a strap round it. Luggage always gave an indication of the length of the visit.

"Perhaps you would like to see your room now? Tea is served at four o'clock."

The closing of the front door, the patter, patter of the Housekeeper's shoes over the linoleum of the hall, and the more solid thump of the visitor. Then silence. Mrs. Justine returned to her orange.

They met at tea. Tea at Brackley Hall was the one meal of the day served without ceremony. Residents could attend or not as they desired. There was less restraint about tea. The eternal conversation of maladies rose to a high frenzy; for everybody at the Hall was, from small to large degrees, ill. Some were definitely ill, others vaguely convalescent.

The institution had been in existence for ten years. The owner, an American lady of wealth and serious altruistic tendencies, with an eye to business and Gabriel's record book of good acts, had bought the estate from the bankrupted heir of a declining family and converted the mansion into a hotel-cum-sanatorium for suffering humanity of the middle-classes. The place was cheap. It was healthy. And so they came, faded ladies of middle age, retired Army officers, neurasthenic girls, fragile young men, old and young, to rest, to recuperate, but seldom to stay. Brackley Hall paid its way. That it made no profit warmed the owner's heart at thought of her own magnanimous behavior. Her

dollars paved a road to Paradise. And Mrs. Justine had been there nine years and seven months. . . .

She came in to tea, purposely last of all. She waited outside the door for a second or two to make certain that the meal was in full progress. Then she entered the drawing-room. She noticed the newcomer at once. A tingling ran up and down her spine. Mrs. Mortimer was installed at Mrs. Justine's small, especial table. Outrage!

In such a place, in such circumstances, the awful fact must have been apparent to all those present: to Major Settle, to Betty White, to the Chivers girl and young Swaine, to little Miss Morecombe and old Mrs. Willoughby. They must have known what such audacity on Mrs. Mortimer's part might lead to, as well as they knew that it wasn't Mrs. Mortimer's fault since she had as yet no knowledge of Mrs. Justine's position in the Hall. That they had not warned Mrs. Mortimer may have been due to that susceptibility on the part of the human creature to get a bit of its own back. Not that they knew what to get back from Mrs. Justine.

Major Settle—and credit is due to him—certainly attempted to relieve the tension by rising and bowing to Mrs. Justine and forcing into his raw red face a smile of sympathy.

Mrs. Justine, progressing down the drawing-room slowly and dignified, inclined her head at the Major and said:

"The oranges were delightful, Major."

"Not at all," cried Major Settle. "Not at all."

The Chivers girl, who was a secretary in the city, now on a fortnight's convalescence after an appendix operation, giggled faintly. Mrs. Justine blew through her nostrils at her. Young Swaine, who thought Miss Chivers a frightful good sort, whispered, "I say!"

Mrs. Justine passed on. She had run the gauntlet of the tea table and chairs; there now remained the sofa and settee, and after that, in the far corner by the window, the final objective, her own table. Her own especial little round table with its low chair. Her throne in very truth violated, seized, occupied by a fat comfortable-looking woman with cowlike pale eyes. Horrible.

She paused at the sofa and said to Mrs. Willoughby:

"You have been for a walk, Mrs. Willoughby."

"A little exercise, Mrs. Justine."

"You must take care of yourself, Mrs. Willoughby. You can never trust a heart."

Mrs. Willoughby sighed.

"It is a constant fear."

"But the Hall will set you up, Mrs. Willoughby."

Miss Morecombe blinked her eyes.

"People with hearts," she said, "are like doors with creaky hinges."

Mrs. Justine pointed her chin at her

"Hinges? Miss Morecombe!"

"They hang on forever," said Betty White and glanced at Mrs. Mortimer.

And now the moment had come. They faced each other. Black hard eyes staring at pale glassy eyes. But Mrs. Mortimer did not move. She sat in the little low chair as if she had been poured in molten. She oozed into every crevice of it. Her fat round knees touched the table. Her plump white hand lay near Mrs. Justine's plate. Her small mouth was full of Mrs. Justine's bread and butter. Nothing so immovable had ever been seen in Brackley Hall.

And before that stolid, ponderous, indomitable antagonist Mrs. Justine quailed. Her little mean heart shriveled up inside her. She felt it contracting. She wanted to cry. Everybody was watching her. Her position as the only real resident of the Hall was at stake. She who had reigned so long, who by virtue of her complaint demanded and received first attention, was in sudden conflict with a usurper. For Mrs. Mortimer was usurping: she was the center of attraction.

Mrs. Justine moistened her dry lips. She could feel the malicious eyes of the Chivers girl stabbing her in the back.

Then she coughed and dabbed at her lips with her handkerchief.

No effect! The never-failing gesture had failed!

Young Swaine could be heard again, "I *say!*"

Mrs. Justine plunged.

"I am afraid you have taken my seat," she said.

Mrs. Mortimer slowly raised her head.

"I beg your pardon," she said.

"My seat!" said Mrs. Justine in a husky voice.

"I am so sorry."

Deep down inside of Mrs. Justine a shrill voice was calling, "Get out, get out, you great, nasty, fat thing. You white fat slug. Get out of my seat. How dare you!"

But Mrs. Mortimer remained where she was.

It was, of course, typical of Major Settle that, gallant officer and gentleman, he should attempt rescue. He stumped across the room. The veins on his temples were standing out.

"I don't think you know each other," he said. "Bad management, nobody to introduce. Make complaints. Make misunderstandings. Mrs. Justine, Mrs. Mortimer. Mrs. Justine, our oldest—er—resident—the only resident, the key-note—the keystone of the Hall. Mrs. Mortimer, who has just come—"

"How do you do?" said Mrs. Mortimer.

The Major bent down.

"Mrs. Justine always sits here—you understand—no matter, of course, no matter, but there you are."

"Oh! yes," said Mrs. Mortimer.

The Major wriggled his lips. Damn it! A fool of a woman. Couldn't she see? The very devil.

"I'm sure you understand," said Major Settle.

"Of course I do," said Mrs. Mortimer and suddenly beamed upon Mrs. Justine. And Mrs. Justine smiled back faintly. Victory! But the sensation of relief, of a tension relaxed, was scarcely hers when Mrs. Mortimer shot her shaft.

"Then," said Mrs. Mortimer, "I'm sure Major Settle—it is Major Settle, isn't it?—would draw up another chair and we can share this nice little table."

And since there was nothing else to do, Major Settle complied. The counter-attack was completely successful.

It was a meal which Mrs. Justine never forgot. She sat facing her rival, inwardly seething, burning with indignation, outraged and furious. Nor was she allowed to endure in silence. Mrs. Mortimer talked to her. Her deep, full voice boomed in Mrs. Justine's ear.

"I had no idea, of course, that everyone had special places."

"*Everyone* has not," Mrs. Justine, acidulously.

"No? You have been here some time? It's a very pretty place."

"I have been here nearly ten years."

"Have you really? It speaks well for the comforts of the Hall."

"Very few people stay long."

"Is that so? You surprise me. I could settle here very well, I think. It is so pleasant to have company around."

Mrs. Justine pressed her lips together.

"I noticed—" Mrs. Mortimer lowered her voice—"I noticed just now, Mrs. Justine—the little cough. I myself have a little weakness—" she tapped her expansive chest—"a dicky heart! Nothing serious, of course, but it gives one sympathy with sufferers."

Mrs. Justine thawed.

"I have to take very great care of myself."

Those pale solemn eyes gleamed at her.

"I am sure you do. And yet you do not look so great an invalid. But then, I'm sure you have courage."

What a funny blind smile the woman had! No expression in her face at all!

"I feel, Mrs. Justine, that we might be very good friends. I am generally right in my prophecies. I am a little psychic, you know."

Good friends indeed!

"I have brought with me some novels. If at any time I could lend you a book . . . I have some interesting things."

She could keep her books! Interfering creature!

"Perhaps sometime you would show me round the grounds. You must know them by heart."

Was the woman mocking her? Was there an undertone in that monotonous voice? Was the woman a fool—or was she crafty, full of guile, concealing her brain behind that solid screen of flesh?

"I do not walk much," said Mrs. Justine, freezing again.

So ended the first encounter. It left Mrs. Justine a little shaken. She did not that afternoon sit, as was her custom, in the conservatory between five and seven, but went up to her room. Never before had she done such a thing. Realization of the fact increased her exasperation. She told herself that it made a nice change to come upstairs. She knew she lied. She knew that she had fled from a presence: that she was afraid. But of what was she afraid?

Perhaps the Chivers girl was not far from the truth when she said to young Swaine:

"The fat 'un pricked the bubble."

"It was priceless, wasn't it?" They sat side by side on the porch.

"She saw through that old fraud."

"She's not such a fool as she looks."

"She's no fool. She caught old Justine on the hop. When they had to share the table, did you notice how old Justine kept on edging her plate farther on, trying to crowd Fatty out? Wasn't it a scream?"

"It was," agreed young Swaine fervently.

"Well, I shall be jolly glad to get out of this place. The doc comes down to-morrow, and I'll be off Monday with any luck. It's all right here, of course, but—these old women. Major Settle bought Justine more oranges to-day. Then that new couple who've come, I saw the girl bringing in some grapes. You know where *they* went. She's sort of legend, old Justine. It's all a myth. She plays up to people. You see, I've been here longer than most people. That's just the point. You think she's a nice old thing and you're sorry for her because she's possibly T.B., and by the time you've found out she's a fraud, it's time for you to go."

"But she's an invalid. It must be pretty awful to have consumption."

"It must be pretty awful to be like her."

Scientists have speculated from time immemorial what must occur when an irresistible force meets an immovable body. The layman, scarcely interested in facts of such pure theory, can but suppose the impact to be at least considerable. In Brackley Hall everyone was too absorbed with his own essential problems to ponder the results of the impinging of the presence of Mrs. Justine upon that of Mrs. Mortimer. Major Settle knew there was trouble in the air, felt it vaguely, and worried over it and, if he waited with strained inner ears for the clash of the impact, heard nothing, and within the week he was glad to realize that the two women had become friendly. But this is not the story of Major Settle, who was always kind and clumsily considerate. It is the story of two women driven to seek the same thing, the story of a passing on of evil, the worm that does not die.

The situation evolved slowly but with a dreadful deliberation.

Two days after the tea incident Mrs. Justine, seated in the conservatory, was busy with needle and thread, hemstitching a small mauve handkerchief. For the moment she was at peace, letting her mind wander reminiscently, paying very little attention to her task. She was not a good needlewoman. She had no particular wish to be. Before her, beside her workbasket, was a small round tin wrapped in brown paper, tied with string. It had arrived by the morning's post, and it contained half a pound of Devonshire cream sent to her by a past visitor to the Hall. Quite often people sent her such small gifts, which aug-

mented her stores given by present visitors to the Hall. For, you must understand, everyone knew that Mrs. Justine was much to be pitied inasmuch as she was very poor, widowed, alone in the world, and an invalid. Most people became aware of these facts fairly soon after their arrival. No publicity agent could ever have done for Mrs. Justine what she did for herself. She was very expert.

She was thinking in a pleasant way about nothing in particular when a shadow fell across her work and immediately across her mind, so that she knew without looking round that Mrs. Mortimer was behind her. A rabbit must feel as she then felt when a dog, motionless, tense and eager, sniffs at its hiding place in a grass tuft.

"Busy as usual, I see."

Mrs. Justine shivered.

"I like to be occupied," she said.

Then came the grating of a chair, and Mrs. Mortimer was seated beside her. Mrs. Justine peered round. There she was, the great stolid thing, wedged into a deck chair and with her vacuous eyes fixed upon the tin of cream. Mrs. Justine's fingers twitched in a forbidden impulse to snatch away her present and hide it. Then Mrs. Mortimer looked at the handkerchief.

"What pretty work," she said softly.

It wasn't pretty work, and no one knew it better than its creator, but she held the poor square of linen up and smiled at it.

"It's a nice color, I think," she said.

She had not till this moment considered its color. She had bought the little piece of remnant in the village, taking the first that came. Anything would do.

"I'm afraid I'm so clumsy with my fingers," said Mrs. Mortimer. "I do envy clever people like you."

Inwardly Mrs. Justine quaked. She wanted to call out, "Oh, go away. Please go away and leave me in peace. Everywhere I go I find you too. I'm frightened of you. I don't ever know what you're thinking about. I hate you. You can't be such a fool as to think *I* can sew."

"I see the postman has called," said Mrs. Mortimer.

This hidden thrust and parry was intolerable. The enemy must be driven into the open.

"One of my old friends sends me a little cream from time to time," she explained. "Such a nice girl—a young wife who stayed in the Hall a year ago. It's nice not to be forgotten."

"Very nice indeed."

"As a matter of fact it's for her I'm making this little memento."

"How sweet of you to think of that," murmured Mrs. Mortimer.

Without doubt both women were then simultaneously doing a small sum in arithmetic. Something perhaps like this: half a pound of cream at one and sixpence, fourpence postage, which makes one and tenpence, in return for a farthing's worth of cotton, the wear and tear of a needle and thimble, and fourpenny worth of cambric. Result: one and fivepence, three farthings, less twopence postage, to the good. Fair exchange is no robbery. How easy it is to be mean when you're a woman and know the way. A minor art of middle age, but to Mrs. Justine and Mrs. Mortimer the art of very arts.

"I'm sure she'll be pleased," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"I hope so," and again that voice inside her, now pitifully crying, "What did you explain for? There was no need to explain. You're giving things away. She's watching you. She's eating you up."

Mrs. Justine cleared her throat. Her little dry cough always came to her help in emergency. It was her constant companion, an action as reflex as the shutting of an eyelid to a threatened eye. And sometimes Mrs. Justine would have to dab her lips to wipe away the acid taint of blood.

"Your cough doesn't improve," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"It's nothing," declared Mrs. Justine. It was, she knew, everything to her, her stock-in-trade, her most valuable property in her little acts of arousing pity. She knew what it was worth.

"It's more than that," continued Mrs. Mortimer. "I was once a hospital nurse, dear."

"Were you?" asked Mrs. Justine weakly. This was terrible.

"And I have seen a great many similar cases. Very tragic."

"I'm not a serious case." Never before had she been forced to such an admission.

"I shouldn't like to say. That is the strangest thing about phthisis. The patient always convinces herself that she is recovering. They will never admit defeat. It is a symptom. For many years I was in a tubercular sanatorium. It was always the same. 'I'm getting better, matron'—I was matron, you know, dear. 'I'm much better than I was.' And of course we used to agree. It was the only thing to do. But we knew. We *knew*. Time would show, and slowly and surely, little by little the end would approach, the tissues slowly dissolving away, the essential—"

"Oh! for goodness gracious, *stop!*" cried Mrs. Justine. She was trembling, and the mauve handkerchief fell to the floor. Mrs. Mortimer, grunting, bent down and picked it up for her friend. She was smiling, her wide white face curved into a smile and her cowlike eyes not glassy now, but strangely gleaming, hypnotizing, like a snake's.

"But tuberculosis is rare over forty-five," she said slowly.

Very pale was Mrs. Justine. Could she hide nothing from this awful woman? She rose to her feet, agitated, her eyes flicking this way, that way, seeking to escape the penetrating regard that held them.

"I must go up to my room," she said, "to take my medicine. I had forgotten." She shuffled through the doorway.

When she had gone Mrs. Mortimer pushed the wicker chair out of the way with her small square foot. Then she moved her deck chair into the nice spot of mottled shade and sunlight which Mrs. Justine had enjoyed so much. She lay back in her chair, drowsy, contented, and at ease. From this position she could see the drive and watch who came along. Also she could see, rather out of focus, but, nevertheless, visible, a little round tin of Devonshire cream. Instinctively her tongue crept out and moistened her little thin lips. Like Mrs. Justine, she adored Devonshire cream. She, too, knew how nice it was to be greedy, and how poverty brought a rarer taste to little delicacies.

Thereafter nearly everyone in Brackley Hall realized that Mrs. Justine was the victim of some internal conflict. She no longer received small presents as her due; she became more silent, asserting herself less vigorously. Once or twice she was almost diffident, a strange humility settled upon her. Those of them who were accustomed to her idiosyncrasies, to her rather apparent histrionic gestures to gain sympathy, those who previously had accepted her for what she was, being scarcely interested enough to suspect her motives, now began to criticize her. So rapidly dies a legend. She had said she was dangerously ill, that poverty threatened her, that loneliness was her lot, and they had accepted her word and became mildly sorry for her, had pandered to her greed. Now she no longer played her part, and even Major Settle became indignant with her (or in reality was he indignant with himself?) in that she had played upon his feelings and, "Damn it," said the Major, "drawn her rations of oranges off me!"

And it was because of the pale, untroubled eye of Mrs. Mortimer upon her that Mrs. Justine dared not reassert herself. You must set a thief to catch a thief.

But Mrs. Mortimer was above suspicion. Was there malice in so fat and cheerful and dull a woman? Was there not honesty and stupid kindliness in her?

"Now that's a very nice woman," said Major Settle. "She's downright. There's nothing tricksy about *her!*"

"*She's* good company," said old Mrs. Willoughby. "The life and soul of a party."

"A jolly good sort," said young Swaine.

"When Greek meets Greek!" said the Chivers girl. She never minded what *she* said. She was leaving the Hall quite soon. Besides, never having been tricked by Mrs. Justine, she was beginning to feel rather sorry for her. She could afford to.

But nobody saw the final scene; nobody even knew of it. I think if he had he would have laughed. And that, maybe, in self-defense. And perhaps it was a laughable matter. But was it? And is there honor among thieves? For one afternoon Mrs. Justine, encountering Mrs. Mortimer in the passage, invited her into her room. The window was open and the warm air, spiced and earthy, told of full-blown spring. Down in the dell the cuckoo called.

"I want to speak to you in private," said Mrs. Justine.

"Certainly, dear." Mrs. Mortimer took a chair and filled it.

Mrs. Justine coughed and her handkerchief went to her lips.

She looked a very old and vanquished woman.

"How long are you going to stay here?" she asked.

"I haven't really thought about it." Mrs. Mortimer appeared faintly surprised.

"Please—" Mrs. Justine waved her hands in the air. "Please go away!"

"I—"

"Go away," and Mrs. Justine's voice was very shrill. "I'm an old woman and I'm ill. I've got nowhere to go to. I've been here so long. What shall I do? Oh! what shall I do?"

"I think you're beside yourself," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"How can you say such things," cried Mrs. Justine. "You know how you're tormenting me."

"Why! We're such friends."

"You're a devil. You're driving me out. It's my place. I was here first. From the moment you came you've been driving me out. You know you have. I can't stop you. That's what I'm telling you. You've won."

"Well! I never," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"You've won. I'm nothing now. It was never any good with you. I knew it. Oh! I knew it. You see what they don't see." She coughed again.

"A nasty bronchial cough," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"You know that too. They don't. They think I'm consumptive. I'm not. I'm not. I've had the cough for years and the blood— I've a weak heart. It's nothing more."

"I knew that consumption was rare over forty-five," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"You know everything. And now I've told you everything. I had to. You won't drive me away? You won't stay here? Please go. I've nothing else, absolutely nothing else. I shall have to go back to my sisters. It's awful there. You don't know how awful it is. The food's so coarse. There are no little things. You know what little things mean to a woman. You're a woman yourself. And this is really making me ill. It's hurting my heart. Please go."

Mrs. Mortimer closed her eyes. She seemed to be thinking.

"Of course—" she murmured.

Then Mrs. Justine was beside her. Her withered hands groped for Mrs. Mortimer's plump white fingers, found them, clung to them.

"You're kind really, aren't you?" She cried. "You understand, don't you? I'm lonely, I've nowhere to go."

"Neither have I!" said Mrs. Mortimer.

"But it's different. It must be different."

"Not in the least," said Mrs. Mortimer calmly. She got up and disentangled herself.

"After all," she said with dignity,

"there is such a thing as social duty. My sympathy, my very real sympathy for you, dear, must not stand in the way of my duty. And if you have imposed upon other people, it is my bounden duty to expose such an imposition."

Then, large as she was, she glided through the doorway and went.

The next afternoon at precisely three o'clock Mrs. Mortimer sat in a wicker chair in the conservatory. There was no better place to watch the drive and see who came—or departed. She had just watched a carriage depart and had been interested to observe Mrs. Justine's luggage.

Several minutes ago the rattling of the carriage wheels and the clop-clop of the horses' hoofs had ceased. By Mrs. Mortimer's side was a small basket containing some peaches. She lifted one delicately from its place and nibbled at it. She had told Major Settle that morning that she doted on peaches. A small piece of the soft velvety skin adhered to her small lower lip. She removed it and murmured:

"Not ripe. They're the cheap sort. It's what you would expect."

Down amidst the thickets of the lower slopes the cuckoo called. The voice in the trees of the dell continued.

AMBUSCADE

BY JOSEPH AUSLANDER

HOW softly sits the shadow in the sun!
How hushed the air is! From the blackbird's flute
No bubble swells and bursts; the wren is mute;
The polka-dotted butterfly is one
With his own image in oblivion;
Time, like a mole, has burrowed to the root
Of silence; the gold moment is a fruit
Globed on a branch of crystal spider-spun.

I move through this luxurious ambuscade
Unnoticed, unannounced, a Philistine
In Israel's Temple, trapped but not betrayed,
Seeing her secret strength, myself unseen—
Till suddenly, as I step, I touch the rod
That, flowering, leaves me face to face with God!

RUSSIA'S WORLD GAME

BY STANLEY HIGH

JOHN WESLEY'S inclusive declaration that "the world is my parish" is well matched by the prophets of Communism. "The world is round," Karl Marx once wrote to Engels, "and, therefore, the workmen's revolution for its victory must encircle the entire globe." Communism, perhaps more aggressively than either Christianity or Mohammedanism, is a missionary faith.

"We are revolutionists from head to foot," Trotsky declares. "We were always revolutionists; we are to-day; and we shall remain that to the end." Which means, specifically, that the Soviets, despite their adjustment to the hard facts of a capitalistic world, are content only when they are making proselytes and organizing them for the violent achievement of the Communist millennium. Although ostensibly occupied with trade or crops or the niceties of diplomatic procedure, the heart of the good Communist is in none of these things. The Soviet agent may be concerned in many laudable undertakings; but it is safe to say that his first desire is for converts and for outbreaks of whatever sort that may produce them. However his credentials read, he is, first of all, a missionary.

Communism's actual program of foreign missions is set up and administered through the Third International. The Government of Soviet Russia is distinct from the principles and plans of the Third International in much the same way that any particular national administration in the United States is distinct from the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and the various permanent agencies which have been set up to give them force—with this difference, that those who constitute the administration in Soviet Russia are pledged, through the International, to foist their government, by fair means or foul, upon all mankind.

The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is, at present, confined to Russia; but its constitution is designed to make quick place for any state, in any part of the world, which can be brought into the Communist fellowship. We aim, said Lenin, at the union "of all nations of the world into a single world-wide Soviet Republic." To this end the unmodified creed of the Soviets in their relation to the non-Communized world at large declares, among other things, that:

"The present is the period of destruction and crushing of the capitalistic system of the whole world. . . .

"The world situation demands immediate and as perfect as possible relations between the different groups of the revolutionary proletariat and a complete alliance of all the countries in which the revolution has already succeeded.

"The most important method is the mass action of the proletariat, including armed struggle against the Government power of the capitalists."

This, officially, is the missionary platform of the Third International. Every member of the party, inside the Russian Government and out, is pledged to it. Its special emissaries—trained evangelists they are—go forth, their orthodoxy tested, to carry the Marxian gospel unto the uttermost ends of the

earth. From rather wide observation, I am convinced that, as between Communists and Christians, the former have undertaken their world commission with greater zeal.

There are, of course, certain initial advantages in the missionary strategy of the Communists. For one thing, they are united. There are factions within the party, but there is only one party. Trotsky and Zinoviev, Stalin and Radek may fight most bitterly within the councils of the Central Executive Committee in Moscow; but there is no conflict in the creed that the agents of Communism preach to the world. Whether they speak to African miners, Malay plantation hands, or to mobs of Chinese coolies, their language is always the same; with the same denouncement of things as they are, the same battle-cry for the struggle to change them, the same promises of triumph, and the whole topped off with the same picture of a world-wide, under-dog millennium. There is no confusion of form, of sect, or of doctrine.

But with all this unity of purpose, there is an amazing variability of activity. Among Christians there are specific institutions to be served, ecclesiastical interests to be maintained, denominational prestige to be bolstered. The Communist is troubled by none of these limitations. He joins whomever and whatever is going his way or, at least, is headed enough in his way to appear to be open to persuasion. At Tashkent University, a Communist school of missions in Central Asia where the Soviets are said to turn out each year a large class of Asiatics, a graduation charge is given to each student:

"Proceed into Asia! Ally yourself with every movement of whatever sort that is subversive of the established order. Foster the Revolution!"

Any thread of unrest, industrial, political, social, or intellectual, is quickly picked out by the Communist missionary in the hope that it can be woven into the fabric of World Revolution.

Then, too, the Communist is unhampered by color bars. When the Christian missionary preaches race equality, the whole history of white world domination rises up to confound his message. The Soviet finds it less difficult to be taken at face value. If his audience is uninformed, as it usually is, he can point with pride to Russia's gratis concessions to China, her participation in innumerable strikes and uprisings, her aggressive support for the struggles of backward peoples.

Moscow, moreover, provides friendly shelter for outlawed trouble-makers and the defeated sponsors of innumerable lost causes from every corner of the world. When Semaung, the ingenious Malay who instigated last year's uprising in the Dutch East Indies, was expelled from Java, he found that fetes and parades and general acclaim awaited him in the Soviet capital. When Feng Yu-hsien, China's Christian General, was badly beaten by General Chang Tso-ling, he journeyed to Moscow where a hero's welcome, free advice, and succor of a more practical sort aided his recuperation. Even the United States has representation in Russia's colony of outcasts. For the members of this colony there are no Jim Crow cars and no Exclusion Laws. Color lines are never drawn. And the report of their experiences at the hands of their Soviet hosts goes out to the ends of the earth to enhance the prestige of the spokesmen for Communism and to increase the acceptability of their message.

Finally, the Communist missionary is at an advantage because he concerns himself only with proletarians. For the maladies that afflict them he is a specialist. He diagnoses, exhorts, and prescribes—always in the exact fashion most likely to please the patient. His task, in this, is not complex. The most pressing affliction of the world's proletariat is their inadequate supply of the things necessary to life: food and clothing and shelter. The Communist does not evade this issue. Rather, it is the

sort of issue he seeks. His panacea is simple and to the point. Since the working classes do not possess, he proposes to organize them to take by force from the possessing bourgeoisie. The vogue of the Communist in many places, particularly through the non-white world, is a product, in considerable measure, of the apparent simplicity and forthrightness of his approach to this critical question of economic survival.

When the Christian faces this question he has no easy solution to offer. There is no quick panacea in a program of education—even of agricultural and industrial education—and scant material out of which to stir the masses. Moral and spiritual considerations, which the Christian is impelled to urge, are of even less immediate significance. This whole gospel of development and ultimate reward is an easy mark for the Communist.

He assails it as mere evasion or, more often, as proof that the Christian, having sold out to the capitalists, is enlisted to prevent the rise of the proletariat. His attacks, moreover, are having a salutary effect. It is no longer possible, when men are starving, for Christianity to concern itself exclusively with their souls. The Communist has helped, quite contrary, doubtless, to his own desires, to make room—small room—in the Christian missionary enterprise, for the question of economic redemption.

II

With these advantages of tactics and of program the Communist has made a place for himself in the non-white world much larger than appears in the observable results of his labors. I have followed his trail from Johannesburg to Tokio. Across that world one inescapable achievement stands to his credit. It is reflected in innumerable eddies in the currents of life that are sweeping through Africa and Asia. But it is more significant than surface disturbances; for the Communist has brought the exploited classes of the world of color to the threshold of articulate expression.

I visited, one day, the headquarters of a native labor union in one of the great industrial centers of Africa. Native labor—in keeping with the prevalent white program of repression—was forbidden to organize. This policy, as usual, did not prevent organization, but kept it out of sight. The union maintained mobile offices, which I had some difficulty in finding. The president, at the time of my visit, was in temporary exile; but the union secretary was very much on hand. He explained, at some length, the history and remarkable growth of the organization. Then, to make the story concrete, he piled on his desk half a dozen volumes of the Membership Register.

"Here," he said, "are nearly fifty thousand names. They are the material out of which we are making a negro dictatorship. The whites have had their day in this part of the world. We know the best that we can expect from them. Every new name in this register speeds the time when, by force of arms and of boycott, we will begin to do for ourselves what your race has refused to do for us."

The source of the inspiration for this movement is not far to seek. The daily paper of the organization calls upon negro Africa to follow "the outstanding example of the unexampled victorious Russian workers who have overthrown the tyrannical imperialist capitalist regime of Russia and have established in its place a Workers' Republic, who can now decide their own destiny and mold the future according to their own desires. . . . We believe that within ourselves lives the unrealized power to achieve what the Russian workers did, and not wait on any savior or power from below or on high to aid us, but to bring it about by our united efforts and the strong right arm of labor—'A Universal Commune, where the tyrant shall never be known'."

III

It is not in Africa, however, but in Asia that the world game of the Soviets is being most aggressively played. Lenin gave it scriptural sanction with the declaration that "when the Russian proletarian movement at its maximum succeeds in effecting a junction with the populations of Asia, the world revolution and its corollary, a universal Soviet republic, may be considered as secured." As early as 1919 an Oriental Section of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs was set up in Moscow. A famous Orientalist, Vosnesenski by name, presided over it. The disorders of that year in Russia did not prevent the convening, at Tashkent, of a Soviet sponsored conference with the declared purpose of fostering whatever Communist or Pan-Islamic movements seemed likely to disrupt Central Asia. A second and similar gathering met a year later in Samarkand. Unrest had its exponents on hand from every corner of the East. Here was organized the Union of Liberation of the East. The subsequent history of this order can be found in anti-European outbreaks all the way from Morocco to Peking. Later in 1920, after the Third International had placed its seal upon the enterprise, a Pan-Oriental Congress assembled in Baku.

This gathering easily eclipsed those that had preceded it. Some two thousand delegates were in attendance. They represented thirty-seven different nationalities. They were intent upon one purpose: the speedy ousting of the white man from the East. The Soviets, represented officially by Zinoviev and Radek, were alert to lend their aid and counsel. Under Moscow's extended wing a sort of Soviet-at-large was established in Baku to spread propaganda and to speed action through the Orient. Included in this Soviet were a Propaganda Division, intrusted with various tasks including the publication, in many Oriental languages, of a newspaper, *People of the East;* an Administrative and Executive Division; and a Division of Instruction. At Baku Moscow first openly endorsed a specific program for the Communistic evangelization of Asia. That the program has produced results, of a sort, is undeniable.

I went to Java on the heels of last winter's miniature revolution. It was only the execution, not the plan, which was in miniature. The plan called for spontaneous uprisings throughout Java and Sumatra, the routing of the Dutch authorities and the establishment in their place of a Malay-Moslem dictatorship under the ægis of Moscow. But arrangements went awry. There were uprisings, but they were sporadic rather than spontaneous. The people, save in one section of Sumatra, showed no particular interest in the affair. And the shock troops of the revolt, carefully tutored by Malays whose technic had been learned in Russia, were easily defeated. When I reached Batavia the ringleaders—among them the Malay, Semaung, who had been acclaimed and instructed by the Soviets—had been rounded up and were awaiting shipment to a district especially reserved for them in Dutch New Guinea.

The agency of Russia in the Dutch East Indies was the P.K.I., the Association of Indonesian Communists, with its auxiliary, the notorious D.O., "Organization of Death," whose members were required to show proof that they had "the courage of the deed." An elaborate system of Communist cells was set up, in the best Soviet fashion, throughout the centers of Java and southern Sumatra. Preliminary trials of strength were made in numerous strikes that took place during 1925 and 1926. A revolutionary army was in process of formation, with smuggled arms and ammunition at its disposal. Discovery by the Dutch Secret Service of the scheme for revolt precipitated an uprising before the preparations for it were complete.

But the "Indonesian Revolution," none the less, is one of the most out-

standing of Russia's recent missionary successes. The Soviet press hailed the revolt with all the exaggerated enthusiasm to which it is addicted. A red tide was pictured coming up from the South Seas toward the mainland of Asia. Not defeat, but "a shift of plan" was offered as an explanation for the fact that a proletarian dictatorship was not, finally, set up in the islands. Whatever they failed to accomplish in the Dutch East Indies, the disturbances there provided fresh material in Russia for those whose task it is to maintain the zeal of the rank and file Communists for their world enterprise.

But there has been other fresh material, in considerable amount, from many quarters of the East. I was in Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, during the trial last spring of thirty-eight students drawn from the leading universities of the country and charged with fostering a Communist plot against the government. Some fifteen years ago, in the Imperial University in Tokio, a liberal student movement, the Shin Jin Kai —New Man Society—was organized. The original organization was mild enough. But after the War and the Russian Revolution an aggressive left wing appeared which broke off eventually and established the Students' Union for the Study of Social Science. Local unions were set up in student centers throughout the country. The name of the union, evidently, was merely an academic designation for a rapidly expanding Communistic organization, whose purpose was not so much to debate the merits of Communism as to lay plans for an uprising out of which a proletarian dictatorship might come.

Despite the great seriousness with which the trial was conducted, there appeared to be no immediate threat in this undergraduate enterprise to the stability of the Japanese Empire. But it was a missionary triumph that the Soviets had been able, so successfully, to invade the guarded precincts of Japan's Imperial Universities.

It is in China, however, that the Soviets have played for the largest stakes and with the greatest success. None of the conventional diplomatic achievements of Tchitcherin and the Russian Foreign Office can rank, in recent Soviet history, with the "triumphs" of the Third International in China. In fact, it was Tchitcherin, the present Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, who first called to the Chinese to unite with Russia: "For our success is your success. Our defeat is your defeat. . . . Long live the union of the Russian and Chinese proletariat." This was in 1918. Subsequent developments were designed to establish Russian influence wherever possible with whatever faction China's political turmoil might offer. To facilitate matters, the Soviets abrogated the old concessions, surrendered extra-territoriality, negotiated new treaties, bilateral and based on equality of treatment. To cap it all off with a touch of sentiment, they sent to Peking, not a minister of the rank maintained by the other Powers, but a full-fledged ambassador.

The treaty concessions, it must be said, proved to have little relation to Russia's real purposes in China. The Soviets were aware, in those early days of Joffe and Karakhan, that the Allies would never consent to a return of the old privileges to Russia. They were shrewd enough to realize how much propaganda could be gained by voluntary instead of forced relinquishments. They have made capital of that difference ever since.

But there were other moves in Russia's China game. The Russian diplomatic representatives in Peking—in their joint capacity as government officials and representatives of the Third International—soon realized that the task of converting China must be carried through by Chinese. A group of young Chinese, therefore, were bundled off to Moscow as revolutionary apprentices. They took a short course in world revolt and hurried back to China. Other re-

cruits were enrolled in their places in the Moscow schools.

Some of these returning graduates were sent south to ally themselves with Doctor Sun Yat Sen, whose government was in a perilous state and whose Kuomingtang party was frail and dwindling. They took with them a new spirit, a technic for revolutionary organization, and funds. They acted upon Moscow's orders and, to make their work more effective, joined the Kuomingtang. With their aid the nationalist movement became renascent. But it was a hard bargain to which Doctor Sun was driven. For when the Soviets finally sent Michael Borodin to Canton to follow and advance the fortunes of the nationalists, it soon became apparent that Russia was concerned for the success of Chinese nationalism only in so far as it could be made to contribute to the Communists' revolutionary enterprise.

The most effective instrument for this contribution Borodin found to be the nationalist labor unions. With a communized labor organization he promised his Moscow masters to dominate the Kuomingtang. That promise he very nearly made good. Wherever the Kuomingtang advanced, mushroom labor unions, organized by Borodin's agents, sprang into life. Their contribution to the nationalist cause was great; but their ultimate purposes were Russian. The literature of the unions is a sufficiently clear indication of that fact. I give here, for example, the translation of several sections of a "Declaration on the Celebration of the Third Year of the Death of Lenin." It should be noted that the poster, printed in Chinese for circulation by Chinese unions, does not once refer to Doctor Sun Yat Sen or to the fact that the Kuomingtang is, essentially, an agency for the realization of Chinese nationalism. It reads:

> Lenin, the father of all the farmers and workers of the world and the savior of all nations under oppression, died on this day three years ago. At the height of the anti-imperialistic movement our celebration of his death has great significance.
>
> Though he physically died, his spirit and his doctrine will last forever. During these three years since his death the fight against imperialism has never ceased and is ever-increasing in its wrath so that the root of imperialism is somewhat wavering. This shows the triumph of Lenin's doctrine. . . .
>
> The Kuomin revolution must be carried on the basis of Lenin's doctrine and methods. We must follow his directions in order to render our fight against imperialism successful.
>
> Revolutionary brethren, we need not mourn too much in celebration of Lenin's death, but we should fight on, on and on in accordance with his doctrine. Let us join in saying aloud:
>
> Long live the spirit of Lenin; follow his doctrine; accept his revolutionary principles; accept his principles with regard to farmers; long live Leninism; Chinese people saved forever; success for the World Revolution.

Among the Chinese Communists, who have never represented more than a minority in the Kuomingtang, the reliance upon Russia is unquestioned. Comrade Tan Peng Siang, member of the Chinese section of the Third International, declared last year that "the real Chinese revolution began after the proletariat of Russia became master of the country and was able to extend a helping hand to all oppressed nationalities. . . . All our victories are due to the help that we have received from the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, and it is with your help that we shall sweep all imperialists into the sea."

During the past few months a moderate group of Chinese nationalist leaders have united against the control which the Soviets sought to establish in exchange for Russian aid. But that development does not obscure; it only confirms the fact that Russia's activities in China, far from being the product of unselfish devotion to the interests of "oppressed nationalities," are the result of a determination to make those interests contribute to her own world program.

IV

Russia's missionary enterprise, of course, is not designed exclusively for ensnaring the non-white world. In Western Europe its operation is less apparent only because it is forced to be more subtle. Owing to a real economic dependence upon Europe, Communist evangelists when they travel westward are obliged to take certain precautions. At the present moment the alienation of Russia's customers is bad business—even for the International—and despite the generous measure of unrest which has prevailed in certain European nations since the War, they have retained a basis of political stability unknown to the East, and which the most desperate exertions of the Soviets have been unable to destroy.

Thus, the trail of the reds in Europe is made apparent only by chance or as a result of extra-legal—at least extra-conventional—methods such as Great Britain employed in the Arcos raid.

France, in particular, has had to deal with a widespread, underground Soviet campaign. Ever since, in 1919, Manuilsky went to France as head of a Red Cross Mission to aid Russian troops interned there, Soviet diplomatic agents have appeared to take a considerable share in advancing the plans of the International in that country. Recent investigations trace a considerable measure of the French difficulty in the Riff to the machinations of Moscow. Few international celebrations are allowed to occur in Paris without aggressive interference from the Communist underworld.

Just at present French distrust of the policy of Russia has directed itself against Rakovsky, the Soviet Ambassador at Paris. Rakovsky, it appears, in an undiplomatic moment, signed an appeal to the workingmen of all nations to rise against their governments on behalf of the proletarian government of Russia. The French, politically at any rate, are not easily startled. But the spectacle of the Russian Ambassador assuming the role of anti-French propagandist was a bit unusual. Relations between the two nations will hardly be severed but it is significant that Rakovsky has been recalled.

An interesting sidelight to this incident bears upon the relation of Russian diplomacy to Russian revolutionary propaganda. Rakovsky is a member of the Trotsky party and has stood, with Trotsky, for a relentless prosecution of the extreme program of the International. As an Ambassador, of course, his concerns, ostensibly, were with matters of political convention, of tall hats, frock coats, and teas. As a Communist, however, his devotion to the underground campaign to overthrow the government to which he was accredited appears to have been unflagging.

This record of Soviet-inspired unrest might be greatly extended. It should be made plain, however, that with Communist evangelists scattered to the ends of the earth, Communism, none the less, is not an issue. It is not, in fact, an issue even in Soviet Russia. For a few idyllic days of chaos, following the Revolution in 1917, Communistic practices were attempted in Moscow and in Leningrad. But the cost of such a Utopia proved too great, and counters and cash were restored.

Furthermore, it was soon made plain that any overnight attempt to establish Communism did serious violence to the whole system of Marxian orthodoxy. The revolution which Karl Marx advocated was not to usher in Communism, but the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat was an interim period of development, during which the bourgeois class was to be got rid of and the proletariat trained to carry on the tasks and to assume the authority of the bourgeoisie. Once the dictatorship of the proletariat was established, the workers and peasants were promised immediate possession of the privileges and, in some measure, of the goods of the owning classes. But Com-

munism, itself, is an ideal state which must wait for its establishment till the proletariat is prepared and the bourgeoisie eliminated.

The first step, therefore, is that of revolution. Until those who now own are dispossessed those who have nothing cannot be endowed. That, at any rate, is the Soviet line of reasoning. And it never deviates. The Communist, in theory, is committed to a system for the economic redemption of society. Many of the principles upon which, theoretically, that system is to be built find sanction in New Testament Christianity. There is more than a casual similarity between the eventual goal of the Communist and the earthly Kingdom which Jesus was concerned to establish. If the first devotion of the Communist were to the principles of his gospel, or to the state for which he professes to be struggling, some common ground might be discovered on which to work with him. It is not, however, to principles nor to their organization that the Communist is most fundamentally committed. His first loyalty, on the basis of which the present-day world is obliged to deal with him, is to a certain mechanics of procedure. His place in the history of this period will be less that of a sponsor of those who are oppressed than of an advocate of a single means for their relief. The issue which he raises is not that of economic justice and of social equality, but of violence as the method by which to realize those ideals.

When I met Michael Borodin in Hankow he was busily engaged in explaining to all journalists within reach that Russia was not in China to establish Communism. At great length he pointed out to me that the Chinese are wholly unfitted for any such economic theory. On the basis of that unreadiness, he sought to explain away any sinister implications which I might have found in the Sino-Russian alliance, and to establish the case for Soviet unselfishness. I accepted his statement that he was not concerned with Communism. But even this disclaimer did not prove his purposes in China to be those of a disinterested champion of Chinese nationalism. What he, as a rather admirable spokesman for Moscow, is concerned with, is world revolution. To bring that to pass is a large enough order for one lifetime. Communism he can well afford to leave to his children or his children's children.

Borodin and his fellow party members in Russia, in fact, are notably tolerant toward those who spend their energies attacking Communism. Their bitterest hatred is reserved for so-called "liberals" in various countries who are committed to the same fundamental ideals but to a different method for their realization. The British Labor Party, in particular, is anathema. Its leaders are said to "lick the boots of generals stained with workingmen's blood" and to fear "like fire the armed struggle which alone can decide the question." This antipathy, of course, does not arise out of any fundamental opposition in the British Labor Party to the ideal social order for which the Soviets profess to be striving. Rather, it comes because the British laborer, working for an order of society of the same general sort, is using constitutional methods rather than those of revolution.

V

It is here that the issue is drawn between Communism and Christianity. Throughout the non-white world the Christian missionary rather than the capitalist, is the most frequent object of red attack. There is, I believe, more than an incidental significance in this. The missionary has repeatedly proved his friendship for those movements towards social and racial justice in behalf of which the Communist declares himself to be enlisted. It is a frequent assertion, in certain circles, that Christian missions are largely responsible for the nationalist awakening of the East which the Communist desires, so desperately, to aid. If the establishment of righteous principles were the Communist's first concern, he

would long ago have found a close ally in the representatives of Christianity. But since his first concern is for a revolutionary procedure, his animosity is kindled against the missionary who professes faith in methods of a different sort.

There is a further reason for the peculiar bitterness with which the agents of the Soviets attack the missionary. Communism faces no other competition so serious as that provided by the enterprise of Christian missions. In theory, at any rate, both the Christian and the Communist missionary are committed to a way of life and, as its goal, to an ideal state of society. Both profess the uniqueness of their separate panaceas, and endeavor with evangelical zeal to make them operative throughout the entire world.

It is fundamental to the Christian's faith, however, that this social redemption must be compounded out of love; and even more fundamental to the faith of the Communist that it can only come through class hatred and violence. The Communist, doubtless, has practiced his faith with greater consistency, but the tenets of the two creeds are equally clear. The conflict between them is certain to continue as long as there are either Communists or Christians to take them seriously.

The Communist, however, has forced the issue. His activities are not curbed by the practice of tolerance, which is one of the marks of the liberal Christian of the present. Whatever adjustments may be forced upon him in Russia, where the dictatorship of the proletariat is already established, his missionary activities indicate that for the world at large, where the revolution is yet to be accomplished, his faith is uncompromising.

Eventually, of course, those who champion the Christian gospel may realize the challenge with which the Communists confront them. Just at present that realization waits upon a more fundamental understanding of the world plan of the Soviets. Only lack of such understanding can account for the fact that the very group among Christians of the West that stands most positively against international and inter-racial conflict is most pronounced in its friendliness toward Russia where war is regarded as an inescapable and a welcome cure-all. Public opinion has so advanced in many nations that it is necessary to set forth elaborate apologies for the use of force. Such apologies in Russia, however, would be looked upon as treason and the apologists regarded as enemies of the revolution in much the same way that the Soviets regard the exponents of pacifism in England and America.

The inculcation of militarism in Russia begins in the lowest grades of the government schools and is carried, in thoroughgoing fashion, throughout the entire nation. No other event arouses such wild enthusiasm as a demonstration on behalf of the military. The fact that old names have been changed; that this is the People's Army; that airplanes and gunboats are built, in part, by public subscription is significant only as an indication that militarism, more than in most countries, is an expression of the will of the people.

But the system involves the same elements that have brought about its condemnation in other parts of the world. Hatred and violence are no more salutary as Soviet weapons than they have proved to be in the hands of other peoples. Their persistent employment, however, is the first rule in Russia's world game. To this generation it is not of importance that they are considered the implements for fashioning a more perfect social order. The immediate issue which the Communists have raised is not that of Communism, but of this particular method for its eventual establishment. Our dealings with them need to be governed, first of all, by that fact. In the end, of course, it may appear, even to those whom the Soviets number as their converts, that violence, however well adapted to usher in the Kingdom of Satan, furnishes few materials out of which the Kingdom of Heaven can be built.

The Lion's Mouth

THE ACADEMY OF FOULES

A Fable for Pedagogues

BY PIERCE O'KEEFE

ALONG, long time ago, in what learned men have since come to call The Age of Birds, there flourished a famous Academy of Fowls. Its full title was, The Sylvan Academy for Foules (they kept the antique spelling), An Institution of Higher Musical Education for the Sons and Daughters of The Ornithogentry. It was situated in the upper branches of an oak tree, and there, any fine morning in the year, you could see the boughs and twigs crowded with the children of the best families all receiving instruction from larks, canaries, nightingales, and other expert songsters, while upon your ears there descended from these eager sessions cascades and showers of musical notes, a medley of sweet jargonings. Nearer the ground, on branches where the shade was dense, hunched a few owls, exhausted by years of service, looking preternaturally wise. They were emeritæ, but retained their connection with the Academy on account of their decorative and symbolic value. On the ground at the base a number of hens scratched incessantly, searching with pathetic and undiminishable hope for that mysterious Something which forever eludes their race. They were almost human. A still larger number were disposed in various nests, having laid, about to lay, or just obstinately broody. Their place in the academic economy will shortly be explained.

My tale concerns itself with the fortunes of a certain instructress in the Academy, a canary by the name of Rowena. She had taught faithfully for nine years. For four hours a day and for six days a week during the teaching season she had sat on a branch in one of the draughtier parts of the oak tree, trying to instill the rudiments of singing into promising canaries and vireos, prosperous and hopeless grosbeaks, athletic young crows, clever but superficial starlings, and wastrel sparrows who were good only for tuition fees. During the long summer moult she had outraged nature and squandered her energies, now by preparing new courses in singing and now by trying to lay at least one egg that would hatch. Her colleagues felt that her service should be rewarded. They recommended her for promotion to assistant-cantatrix.

The first committee that sat upon her case was composed of larks, canaries, nightingales, and one cuckoo. The cuckoo was meant to be the ideal neutral in the question about the relative importance of singing and egg-laying. For, on the one hand, she could hardly be said to possess a singing voice and, on the other, considering all the circumstances, her eggs might almost be called anonymous productions. All the members of the committee voted for Rowena's promotion — except one, the cuckoo. She thought that impartiality required of her a negative vote.

Since the recommendation was thus qualified it became necessary, according to the system, for another committee to take the matter up. This was composed entirely of hens, with the cuckoo sitting

in once more as the ideal neutral. These hens neither sang themselves nor were the cause of song in others. All their energies went into laying. They were inordinately prolific.

They had many times taken part in egg-laying contests and usually emerged successful. Quite naturally, therefore, they held that the chief, if not the only, function of the members of the staff was production. An Academy, they declared, is known by the eggs it produces. They were even for having the title of cantatrix changed to genetrix. When "the case of Rowena," as it was now being called, came before them her years of teaching counted for nothing. The first and only question they asked was: What has she produced? Poor Rowena! It was not much that she had to show: two eggs in nine years, and one of them addled. The committee clucked ominously as one hen. This would never do. "After all, it is production we want." So they voted No. All except the cuckoo. This time she voted Yes. She had her reputation for impartiality to maintain.

Thus far The System could hardly be said to have achieved much progress. But there were still many more possibilities in that complicated machine. The case of Rowena—by this time a somewhat battered looking object—was referred to the Principal. The Principal was an eagle. He had been chosen because by common consent he was a bird of broad vision. He spent most of his time soaring in slow majestic arcs in the upper air above the forest, pondering the wide universe, and, in so far as his ranging mind took in the Academy in its sweep, nursing dreams of its expansion. His remote accipitrine gaze never saw the Academy otherwise than in its totality: its details were lost in a blur which he left to other eyes to penetrate. Thus when the case of Rowena came before him, although Rowena was quite literally *vox et prœterea nihil* to him, he knew at once what he had to do. He must conceive her case in relation to "the larger lines of general policy." He sent for his secretary, a clever young catbird.

"How many students have we enrolled?" he asked.

"Two thousand three hundred and forty-five."

"And the number of instructors?"

"Ninety-three."

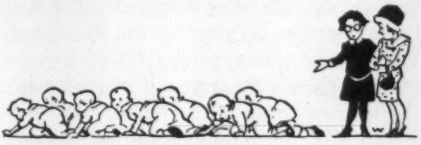
"Hum, hum . . . That means twenty-five point two per instructor. We are aiming at thirty. That settles it: Rowena must go." And with an aquiline smile he mounted once more to the azure vault.

But even yet the machinery of the Academy had not finished its work. A week later the Supreme Board of Supervisors met to grind Rowena into still finer powder. This august body was strangely constituted: in addition to the Eagle there was a penguin (can't fly, can only waddle), a woodpecker (in the lumber business), a blue jay (picks out the eyes of smaller birds), a dodo (extinct elsewhere), several hawks (a predatory tribe), and a raven. They were chosen because individually and collectively they knew nothing and cared less about either singing or the production of eggs. They could thus approach the discussion of any strictly academic question with a dispassionateness scarcely to be distinguished from complete indifference. When, therefore, the Eagle made his motion that Rowena should not be reappointed, they all, without any clear understanding of what was involved, assented.

A few days later Rowena learned to her dismay that she had been dropped, or, as the slang of the place had it, pushed off the branch. But her most poignant emotion came when one of her friends, a nightingale cantatrix, said to her,

"My dear child, I wouldn't let myself feel too distressed about it. We all believe in you and in the work you've been doing here. We'd keep you if we could; but we're helpless. You're just up against the system."

"Ah, the System!" said Rowena. "How pretty it looks from here! Let's call it over and talk to it. Here Puss, Puss, Puss, nice Pussy!"



THE MODERN SCHOOL

BY AGNES ROGERS HYDE

NEITHER Jackie's father nor I wanted to force the child. Although I knew that children were going to school earlier than they did when I was young, I didn't believe in sending my son before he could walk. All my friends' babies were in school, but I may as well admit that I thought the whole idea just a fad. (I sometimes shudder when I remember what I used to say about modern education.)

So much pressure was brought to bear, however, that when Jackie was a year and a half I weakened and made an appointment to see the principal of the Twentieth Century School in Gramercy Park.

I found Miss Worth a capable, intelligent-looking woman, and explained that I had come to consult her about my boy.

"How old is your son?" she asked.

"Just eighteen months."

"And what schools has he been attending?"

"He has never been to school," I murmured.

She looked grave. "Of course, you realize that your boy will start with a heavy handicap. He will have to be with the younger children at first. We prefer to take students at one year of age at the latest—but possibly—" She appeared to be thinking; then, rising, she spoke more kindly, "Now that you are here would you like to see some of the work we are doing?"

Together we walked down a long corridor. Pausing at a door, my guide announced, "This is the Department of Muscular Co-ordination."

We entered a large airy room. It was full of busy happy children—a charming sight. At one end, the floor was marked by broad white lines, and down each path a baby was crawling.

"An elementary class—Crawling," Miss Worth explained.

Thoughtlessly I exclaimed, "Jackie can do that!"

A slight frown flitted across Miss Worth's face. "The untrained eye," she said patiently, "cannot detect the infinite variations in primary motor expression. After years of experiment we have adopted the Klimmermann system."

I stood abashed. For a moment I had glimpsed the vast amount of research back of the quiet woman before me.

"I see," I faltered simply.

We moved on to a more advanced class. There was much more noise.

"The class in Bodily Vigor." Miss Worth explained, adding, "We find that we get the best results when the child tries for simultaneous vocal and motor expression."

Near us a little girl was jumping up and down on what was left of a handsome doll. "Splendid, Angelica!" beamed Miss Worth, adding aside to me, "A born jumper—very interesting."

"Now, Billy"—she turned to a small boy listlessly banging a toy wagon against the wall—"a little more power and precision. Let us see if we cannot knock off the wheel in three *big* blows. One—Two—Three! Bravo!" as Billy, thus encouraged, banged so hard that both wheels came off.

I was immensely impressed. It didn't seem possible that children could learn to do these things.

"Before we go upstairs," said the principal, "I want you to see the results of our methods in one particularly difficult case." She pointed to a child who was industriously dipping water from a basin and pouring it down her pinafore.

"You would hardly believe the progress Editha has made. When she came to us she could only pour sand. We were all very much worried; but now, after months of special tutoring, her report card shows A in Pouring."

"How wonderful!" I gasped.

"We will now visit one of the older classes," said the principal, leading the way up a flight of stairs. "When the children reach the age of five we concentrate on self-expression."

We entered another room, and Miss Worth spoke to the teacher in charge.

"Miss Cambric, ask James if he feels like writing the alphabet for us on the blackboard."

James arose from his desk. "I want to write on the floor," he announced loudly.

Miss Worth smiled and gave me a meaning glance as James with his bit of chalk began to form large clear characters.

"Why does he make them upside down?" I whispered.

"His own conception," replied Miss Worth proudly.

I wanted to run right home and fetch my Jackie, but I felt I should ask one more question. "Do you teach the children reading and spelling and arithmetic?" I inquired timidly.

There was pity in her voice, vision in her eyes as Miss Worth said:

"Not to-day. Educators no longer recognize the need."

One tiny doubt remained in my mind. I had to speak.

"But as they grow older, Miss Worth, what are the results of your methods?"

"My boys of sixteen," she replied—and in her tones there was a note of profound feeling—"are at home in the most complicated systems of modern finance, without a notion of how to add or subtract. My girls of the same age cannot read a single word, yet they discuss the French financial situation and the future of the British Empire with brilliant acumen. My children of fifteen are producing astounding poetry without the faintest knowledge of spelling."

When I told Jackie's father about the Twentieth Century School he couldn't believe it. He was stunned, as I had been, by the immensity of the thing. Finally he spoke softly, "Eight thousand dollars a year seems a good deal. We'll have to give up the car and stay in town for the summers, but no sacrifice is too great when there's a question of giving our son the right start."

SOUR GRAPES

BY FREDERICK LEWIS ALLEN

"IDIOT!" said Professor Parke under his breath as I carried my coffee cup over and took the vacant chair next to him.

"Not you, not you," he added hastily as he caught my eye. "At least, not at the moment. Myself. I was just thinking of the way I have been lapping up the flattery of that sentimental Mrs. Ashurst all through dinner. She told me that it was splendid for a man like me to give up his life to teaching when he could make three times as much money in business. She used the phrase 'great renunciation.' And I actually believed her. Idiot."

"But," said I, "isn't she right? After all, an academic salary—"

"She is wrong," replied Professor Parke with emphasis. "A man can't renounce what he wouldn't have got anyhow. We professors are great ones for spoofing ourselves. We all imagine that we have forsaken wealth for Higher Things. And so, for that matter, do most artists, clergymen, writers, journalists, architects, scientific men, salaried officials, and professional men generally. It's a lovely illusion, but the plain fact is that nineteen out of twenty of us would have fumbled wealth anyway. We form a class—the genteel highbrows—that can

make all sorts of pretty things, but can't make money. It isn't in our blood. There are exceptions among us, but they are rare. Yet when we look at the grapes of wealth over the wall we all say, 'I could have reached them.' And then we add, 'But they appeal to such crude tastes! Now *my* grapes, on the other hand' . . .

"Do you know Bentinck?" pursued the professor warmly. "A typical genteel highbrow, although he's a lawyer. He has recently been appointed to the bench. If Mrs. Ashurst suggested to him that he had renounced a lucrative practice to enter the public service, and asked him if he would not have to retire some day to 'recoup his personal fortunes,' he would feel that at last his great sacrifice was being understood. He confessed as much to me the other day. Bentinck looks at the seven-passenger broughams rolling down the Avenue and says to himself, 'Vulgar baubles, for vulgar Babbitts. I have chosen other and finer satisfactions.' Yet when I put the brutal question to him he admitted that his present salary was just about as big as his average previous earnings, and that the publicity he was getting was an asset from any point of view. Bentinck never had a lucrative practice and never will have one. He knows his law, but the dollars just don't roll his way. He's one of us.

"I will also wager a small amount (such as is at the command of a genteel highbrow) that the Reverend Mr. Baritone of St. Margaret's would lose his surplice in the stock market; that Appleton, the architect who designed St. Margaret's, wouldn't be able to design a selling campaign for the pencils he draws with; and that my colleague Fairchild, who lectures on the history of foreign trade, would contribute a rather distressing chapter to that history if you put him in charge of the export department of a big corporation. Yet Mrs. Ashurst could persuade each and all of these men that they had made the great renunciation. Now I don't say that the gift of making money is any better than the gift of making converts or perspective drawings or textbooks on economics. Perhaps it isn't as good. I simply say that the people who lack it often have in its place a rather touching quality of self-delusion. Hence, my friend, the Sour Grapes School of Literature."

"The what?" said I.

"Sour Grapes School of Literature. As I said a moment ago, most writers couldn't reach the grapes over the wall if they tried. Certainly almost no essayists or poets can. But they can write. Hence the disquisitions in praise of pedestrianism, of the open road and a pack on the back, of modest inns, of conversation (the most inexpensive sport in the world), of reading (which costs somewhat less than polo), of daffodils by the lakeside, contemplation, vagabondage, love in a cottage, hours in a garden, and poverty in general. The authors usually imply that the appreciation of these things requires a very special and advanced and subtle sort of mind, which would recoil with horror from the thought of driving sixty-five miles an hour in a snappy roadster. Maybe it does. Speaking only for myself, I should say that the fellow who can make out a case for the bliss of tramping all day with a pack thumping him in the small of the back deserves credit at least for originality. But I'd feel a little surer of the validity of his argument if I knew he owned a roadster and still liked to wear out his boots. Meanwhile I detect a note of self-defense in his praise of the grapes on his own side of the wall."

"What would you have them write?" I asked.

> "'A Super-heterodyne beneath the Bough,
> A Loaf of Caviare, a Jug of Champagne,
> and Thou'?"

"Ah, you mention the radio," said Professor Parke. "Now there's a curious example of a genteel-highbrow reaction. You apparently think of the radio as one of the perquisites of wealth.

I gather from that that you haven't one?"

"Right," said I. "Can't afford it."

"And you have perhaps been known to speak of the radio as a sign of the materialism of our day, a drug for restless and immature minds, a mark of American standardization, and a menace to the Finer Things of Life?"

"Well, something like that," I admitted.

"That reaction to the radio is still quite prevalent among the genteel highbrows," said Professor Parke. "I have noted that whenever one of my colleagues buys a radio he says that he got it for his children or that it is a great solace to his bedridden mother. It would hardly do in faculty circles to admit that he is daft about whirling the knobs, for the faculty in general can't afford radios and must therefore cherish the luxury of despising them. And why can't they afford them? Why can't you afford one? Your Slavic neighbor in Bog Hollow who collects the local garbage has a very fair radio. The reason is that you and I and the rest of the genteel highbrows, having most of us been genteel for two or three generations, have become used to certain fixed standards of living. Any sudden strain on the budget might upset those standards. So we're up in arms against new things that cost money. Your neighbor the Slav has no standard of living to speak of; he can plank down his money for anything he likes. He grabs the new inventions with delight. You resent—and in self-defense scorn—each new invention as it comes along. Tell me: was your family one of the first or one of the last to install a telephone?"

"One of the last," I confessed.

"And electric lights?"

"Again, one of the last. Some of my relatives still use gas."

"When did you get your first automobile?"

"In 1920."

"In—well, let's say about 1910—the genteel highbrows of your acquaintance sometimes declared that automobiles were vulgar, didn't they?"

"Yes. Noisy things. Brutal things, driven with reckless disregard of human life. People of fine sensibilities preferred the leisure and quiet of a horse and surrey."

"There you are," said the professor in triumph. "The perfect genteel class reaction. We aren't money makers. We admit the value only of those luxuries which we have come to regard as our due through long habit. Other luxuries are beyond us, especially the new ones. But we should be miserable if we admitted an envy of them. Therefore—'Ah,' we say, 'but one must walk really to see the country,' or 'Better to play the violin oneself than to hear the Happiness Boys over the radio,' or 'The big hotels are so commonplace! Now for real flavor give me a quaint old village inn.' And to complete our philosophy we persuade ourselves that we too could have had all these things, but have chosen otherwise. Sour grapes, my boy, sour grapes."

"But, my dear fellow," I cried in dismay, "think what a wretched crowd we'd be if we couldn't call the grapes sour. Would you have us burst into tears whenever a seventy horse-power car goes by and say, 'There's the car I want, and I can't have it'? I claim that it's much more sensible to go upstairs and write an essay on Footpaths and Byways. In fact, I claim that the fox who said the grapes over the wall were sour was one of the wisest characters in fiction. He was adjusted, as the psychologists would say. What we need is a good rousing advertising campaign for the grapes in our own arbor."

Professor Parke thought a moment. "Perhaps you're right," he said finally. "Among ourselves we may admit doubts, but publicly we must keep the financiers in their places, eh?"

"That suits me very well," said I. "Let's encourage Mrs. Ashurst — a woman of profound insight."

THE STRAIN OF CURRENT LIFE

BY EDWARD S. MARTIN

THE newspapers have quoted Dean Inge as saying that hardly anyone now believes that democracy is the final phase of governmental progress.

Why, no! of course it isn't! If we thought heaven was run by democracy and was an illustration of popular government, we might not want to go there. The final phase of governmental progress must be sought in the invisible. So far as appears, it seems to be an autocracy. But for this world democracy may be very suitable, for the errand of persons in this world is to develop, and to gain wisdom; and the more their environment compels them to improve their own circumstances or pay the penalty, the more our life on earth makes for evolution and progress. The Dean ought to know, probably does know, that the high purpose of government is not merely to make things comfortable for the governed. It is to stimulate the governed to self-help. Democratic government is well adapted to do that service, since it is prone to rapid degeneration and needs to be nudged and prodded at frequent intervals if it is to be tolerable at all.

There are proceeding in this country flagrant examples of the propensity of governments to run down hill. Here is a very big and very rich country, and the job of according to it even the necessary minimum of government is enormous. It is a job that is profitable in a money sense only to the unscrupulous. To them it may be very profitable indeed. But the necessary minimum of government is far from satisfying the people whose hands itch to hold the reins over their fellows. What they want is just as much government as the people will endure. They want to shape it according to their own ideas of virtue or of vice. They want the spending of monies, the control of taxation, a meticulous inquiry into everybody's affairs, the ordering of private life, and the definition of crime. Dean Inge must know all that. He sees that government has got to be done by people who have the brains for the job. So he says (as reported) that *Vox populi vox Dei* is bunkum and that Lincoln's government by the people for the people is claptrap. He thinks that the theory of democracy may last in England until the end of the century, but finds it to be "in the condition of an animal less and less able to maintain itself in a state of health and vigor."

The real question about democracy is whether it is fit to produce men competent to manage government and put them into office. Every presidential election in this country is an experiment on that problem, and there is a good deal to favor the theory that such elections and the designation of candidates which precede them are determined by something more than incarnate intelligence. It is either that the invisible powers take an interest in our political concerns and get into the game we think we are playing, or else that the choice of candidates and the success of the one who wins are

determined by factors too complex and obscure for our limited faculties to measure and handle. Of course the idea that Providence takes a hand in our affairs is not novel. Most of the religious people profess to believe it and make prayers based on it. Political conventions usually open with such supplications. All the same, these matters are planned beforehand and organized and worked over with all the diligence our political managers can command. They work at them just as though they could control results, thinking ahead as far as they can, pulling all the wires they can reach, and laboring faithfully and in ways often devious with all the delegates they can get hold of.

That is all right, except perhaps the devious ways; all just as it should be. If we are going to trust in Providence to pull us out of holes and give a right direction to our political courses, we must first do all we can ourselves. After that, if things go our way, it is polite at least to suggest that the Lord is on our side, and if they contradict our judgment and disappoint our efforts, we may well say that Providence is inscrutable and its ways beyond prediction.

In every mind there are underground currents not recognized even by that mind itself. Often enough we cannot predict our own actions. The job of the politician includes calculations of all these subterranean forces and, the more intent he is upon the particular things that he wants, the less qualified he is to estimate these recondite forces correctly. Very common in our political history is the story of best bets that seemed sure to win and finally lost. Very common the story of managers baffled, and a totally unexpected winner.

OUR political narrative for the last four or five years has been very much the story of prosperity: how to bring it; how to keep it. Now with another political effort about to be undertaken, is that issue still going to suffice? Perhaps so, but that is a matter for discussion, and for consideration by politicians. For one of our great parties that issue is supposed to be all-sufficient. Certainly, it did well at the last election; but the other party, if it is going to make any notable performance, has got to offer something new. And what is it that can be offered as yet to American voters which will look better to them than prosperity?

Of course when prosperity cracks because the time has come for it to do so, that is a different matter. With prosperity sick abed, you might even offer virtue with some prospect of getting votes for it, but hardly when prosperity is still up and doing. Certainly we have had it in ample supply. Not perfectly distributed of course—it never is—but a vast flood of it running down to the ocean by various channels and easily diverted into private fields by persons with a gift for that exploit.

Perhaps it is being tried out. Perhaps there will be statistics about it when the flood is over, to help our judgment about its value. Florida, you may recall, had an extraordinary burst of it which more recently became modified. Perhaps earnest seekers after facts might find out something in Florida about the relation of prosperity to human happiness: how much happiness was increased when it bulged, and how much it shrunk when it waned. But we have enough going on right around us here for purposes of observation. What about it? Are we doing better than usual? Has the flood of prosperity been to our advantage? Certainly it has changed life enormously, but has it benefited it? All over the land dwellings have put out new piazzas and blown themselves to coats of paint. There has been vast material construction, and a great deal of it is good; some of it very good and likely to last a long time. All sorts of industrial plants have increased in size, and as a country we can make more things than we used to. But are people happier than they were? Is their behavior

better? Are more people making true progress in human life because of prosperity than when we had less of it?

Maybe they are. As one looks about in a suburban town on his way in a motor car to the train he sees girls going to the high school (and even some boys) and admires their pretty frocks. He naturally says to himself—they must be getting something. He sees the flocks of new cars on the road, fairly cheap cars but much prettier than the cheap cars ever were before, better painted, and finds in that more evidence of prosperity. But, bless you! how filling is it? Cries for help come nowadays from a good many people who have very nice cars indeed. They are not visibly in a bad case. They have enough money, enough things, a sufficient variety of dwellings, good cars, as said; but from many people so furnished with material things proceed evidences of distress. You don't have to go to Hollywood to find them. If you show propensity as a moralist they are quite likely to come to you through the mail, and they seem to come increasingly. They carry the same burden as the old cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" Current sufferers don't word it that way. They ask, "What is the matter with this life? It does not taste good. The things we used to think important—character, manners, high thinking, modesty—don't seem so any more. Everything goes that has wheels under it." They say, "I don't like this life; what is to be done about it?"

So far as observation can guide us, prosperity seems to minister to happiness very considerably. It commands the comforts of life, and really the comforts are not so bad. The most fun in the world—or next to the most—is the exercise of one's creative energy; and in so far as prosperity promotes that, helping people to build houses, develop taste, and increase beauty, it probably does increase happiness.

But that phase of it is seldom permanent. The cries for help come from people who have passed it, people suffering apparently from spiritual or mental exhaustion, people stricken with a sense of the futility of things as they are and penetrated with a strong desire to learn the cure of life. For such people prosperity is no cure. Their "What shall I do to be saved?" means to be saved in this life and from this life. It does not necessarily betoken anxieties about the hereafter. What are you going to do with people who have enough to eat and can get a drink if necessary; who have beds to sleep in and roofs over them and no money cares, and still want to be saved from the life they lead—not a bad life, but not good enough for them? What is the cure? Nothing but love, of course; but how are they going to get it?

The cure of life is set down in the records of the great seer and teacher whose birthday we keep in December, but still the people who need the cure and know they need it and call for it have to be helped to find it. Perhaps helping them to find it is the greatest job; greater than running a steel trust or an oil company or even administering the diffusion of electrical benefits. Perhaps this job of curing lives is the most important of all, and to feel that it is may be what we are coming to when the prosperity issue wears out. The politicians are up against it. The great succeeding issue for a while may be the cure of life or how to be happy in spite of prosperity or even without it.

Perhaps something else has been going on in the United States besides this aggravation of prosperity. Perhaps we have been getting wiser as well as richer. The two advances do not often come at the same time, but they may. The enormous breaches in the habits of life have made everything more fluid than it used to be. It has really been plowing time, and prosperity has helped it by increasing the opportunities of millions of people, raising their wages, putting them on the road, making them more independent, and in many cases much more meddlesome and objection-

able. Prosperity has not lulled this country into slumber. It has not spread a meringue over it. It has been a great factor in waking it up. Truth to say, it has raised hob with it. That is one reason why we get these wails from people who do not like life as it is. Their habits are all disturbed. They have to think too much; think about everything; get new programs of living; figure out the expense of them, and consider how they are going to get the money. It is very tiresome. It involves far too much bookkeeping, especially for purposes of taxation. If presently we all turn away from prosperity and run after religion it is no more than you might expect. But it won't be our grandfathers' religion except in its derivation. The interpretation of it will be ours and our descendants'. It was five years ago that an American observer wrote in a letter: "It seems to me the consolatory reflection is that all those things we were talking about to-day—both the mystical ones and the practical—would be understood and substantially agreed to by millions of persons in America (they would be incomprehensible to anyone else) and the land is being visited by a big spiritual vision of some sort. Whatever we do or say is somehow a part of it and furthers it; and the more detachedly, and as it were irresponsibly, we give way to its intimations the more we assist." Was he right that the land was being visited by a big spiritual vision of some sort? Is the visit still continuing? There are more signs of it now than there were then.

WE HAVE it on the word of eminent authority that one out of ten of the present population of this country goes first or last under treatment for nervous or mental disturbance. Also we are told that of all the hospitals in the country one-half are monopolized by patients suffering from insanity or in need of care and protection to save them from it. Governor Smith in New York State called the other day for fifty million dollars for better hospitals for the care of the insane and the treatment of deranged persons. Such a multitude of people not able to take the responsibility of their own lives and conduct is an enormous burden on the public and apparently it is steadily increasing, and that in these years which are rated as extraordinarily prosperous. Really it does look as though there was something quite serious the matter with us and our negotiation of the problem of existence; something for which increased distributions of money or mass production of commodities does not seem to be a remedy. Is it likely that we shall have an opportunity to try what healing virtues there may be in adversity? Yes, it is likely. One may say, indeed, that it is certain; certain as far as business is concerned. For business prosperity is a matter of ups and downs and adjustments spread over periods of time, and though the wealth of the world increases and holds its increase, and though our command of the resources of nature also increases constantly, and with it our capacity to create more wealth, yet there is no reason to believe that we are quit of fluctuations in prosperity. Every reaction in Wall Street brings evidence of multitudes of people who are waiting for something to drop, and their anxious expectations are not without basis.

None the less, "Take no thought for the morrow," and "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" are still maxims worthy of respect. The wise course is not so much to spend one's thought in anticipating calamity and contriving means to escape it, as so to shape one's life that whether in evil days or good, we shall not fail to live profitably. In so far as we can do that, we shall escape from fear and keep out of sanitariums, but it is a spiritual achievement and implies belief and reliance on things not made by hands.

Personal and Otherwise

PESSIMISM seems to be in the saddle these days. The sad young intellectuals of 1927 pride themselves on the extent and savageness of their disillusionment. The pendulum has taken a long swing since the days when aspiring youth felt sure that life was earnest, life was real, and the grave was not its goal. ***Charles A. Bennett,*** associate professor of philosophy at Yale, thinks it has swung too far; and in the leading article of the month, which he sends us from County Dublin, Ireland (where, being an Irishman by birth, he is enjoying familiar scenes during a leave of absence from New Haven), he states the case against the unrelieved cynicism which prevails to-day. Professor Bennett will be remembered as a frequent Lion's Mouth contributor and as the author of "Freedom vs. Compulsion in Religion" (November, 1926). We commend his present paper to those who feel that to be modern-minded one must insist on the blackness of every cloud and regard all silver linings as sheer hokum.

Whatever one may think of Aimee Semple McPherson, she is as striking and significant a feature of the American scene as the Woolworth Tower, the Dempsey-Tunney fight, or the Mayor of Chicago. ***Sarah Comstock,*** an able journalist who wrote for us not long since a study of the new English liquor legislation, has recently been spending some time in Los Angeles, and a good deal of it in the Angelus Temple. Endeavoring to be as fair as possible to Sister Aimee, Miss Comstock appraises her preaching, her amazing technique as an impresario, and her no less amazing influence.

Readers of HARPER'S MAGAZINE will recall ***Leland Hall's*** recent Timbuctoo papers, written after a stay of several months in the remote city at the edge of the Sahara. It was while he was on his way to Timbuctoo that Mr. Hall had the adventure which he recounts this month. Not with any idea of future publication, but merely because in the midst of the ordeal he decided that the terrific strain would be easier to bear if he tried to watch events with a reportorial eye and put them down on paper, he wrote a long letter to a member of his family about his experience—wrote it within a day or two of the explosion itself. After the publication of the Timbuctoo articles, Mr. Hall showed us this letter, and at our suggestion revised it for publication, changing the names of the ship and her officers in order to prevent possible embarrassment to men to whom he had become deeply attached. Mr. Hall, a New Englander and college instructor with an incorrigible taste for wandering, has now left his teaching position at Smith and set out again for Africa, this time with the hope of working south through Morocco and crossing the unfrequented western edge of the Sahara Desert. Meanwhile, his book *Timbuctoo* is due to appear this month.

Since she first appeared in HARPER'S as a winner of one of our fiction prizes in 1924, ***Ada Jack Carver*** (Mrs. J. B. Snell) of Minden, Louisiana, has been steadily adding to her reputation as one of the distinguished American short-story writers. Several of her stories have appeared in HARPER'S, the most recent of which was "Singing Woman," published last May, and she has made an impressive showing in the annual anthologies of short fiction.

Julian Huxley, professor of zoölogy at King's College, London, since 1925 and previously senior demonstrator in zoölogy at Oxford, comes naturally by both his scientific and literary gifts (whether by heredity or by the influence of environment we leave to the biologists to speculate). He is the grandson of Thomas Henry Huxley, great-nephew of Matthew Arnold, nephew of Mrs. Humphry Ward, and brother of Aldous Huxley.

This month he deals with one of those fascinating themes which lead us across field after field of research and reveal the interdependence of all scientific inquiries.

The author of "Hot Copy," ***M. C. Blackman,*** a new contributor, is only twenty-five years of age; he is a native of Louisiana and a member of the Detroit *Times* staff. He knows at first hand the hard-boiled type of newspaper man whom he presents with such telling irony.

Last month we published an article by Professor Rollin Perkins on the shortcomings of our system of criminal justice. This month ***Edward Hale Bierstadt,*** after touching briefly on the problem with which Professor Perkins dealt in detail, turns to another aspect of the problem of American crime and fixes his spotlight on the police and the reason why they do not catch more crooks. Mr. Bierstadt, a New York editor and writer, author of *Dunsany the Dramatist*, *Lost Trails of the Spanish Main*, and other books, makes a hobby of the study of crime and its detection and punishment, and bases his present article on wide investigation.

H. M. Tomlinson, the London journalist and traveler to far and strange places who wrote *The Sea and the Jungle*, *Old Junk*, *London River*, *Tide Marks* (much of which appeared serially in HARPER'S MAGAZINE) and *Gifts of Fortune*, has achieved this year the greatest popular success of his career with his splendidly written novel *Gallions Reach*. He visited the United States this autumn, and "If War Should Come" is a fruit of this visit. Mr. Tomlinson's acquaintance with the realities of war—of which he speaks in the article—was gained during the time (1914–1917) when he was war correspondent for the London *Daily News* in Belgium and France.

We publish this month the second installment of ***Wilbur Daniel Steele's*** five-part novel and we add here a word to the wise: even if you happened to miss the first installment, it is not too late to begin. Mr. Steele's distinction as a short-story writer is well known. He was winner of the O. Henry Prize in 1926, of a Harper prize in 1925, and of a previous O. Henry prize for maintaining the highest level of merit among American short-story writers over a period of three years. *The Man Who Saw Through Heaven*, his new volume of short tales, is now in the bookstores. At this writing, Mr. Steele has just left New England (where he divides his time between Nantucket and Westport, Connecticut) to spend the winter in Charleston, South Carolina.

Samuel Hopkins Adams, who throws out an original suggestion for the amelioration of marriage, began his journalistic career as a reporter and special writer for the New York *Sun*, became advertising manager of McClure's Magazine and later a member of its editorial staff, subsequently conducted a department ("The Ad-Visor") for the New York *Tribune*, and has written several successful novels, the latest of which is the fiercely discussed *Revelry*.

A new English contributor who will bear watching appears in the person of ***Anthony Richardson.*** We shall shortly publish another story by him in quite a different vein.

Stanley High bases his critical study of Russia's world-wide campaign of revolution and hatred upon extensive travel and experience as a Methodist missionary in China (1919–1920), correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor* in Europe (1922) and Russia (1924), and associate secretary of the Methodist Board of Foreign Missions since that time. He took a theological degree at Boston University in 1923. He is the author of *China's Place in the Sun*, *The Revolt of Youth*, *Europe Turns the Corner*, and *Looking Ahead with Latin America*, and has done much lecturing and writing for the religious press upon international problems.

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Mary Dixon Thayer, a new contributor to HARPERS, is the author of two volumes of verse and a newly-published volume of prose, *Ends of Things;* she is a staff writer for the *Evening Bulletin* of her native Philadelphia, and plays tennis so much better than most poets that in 1926 she was ranked among the first ten women players of the country. ***Joseph Auslander,*** the other poet of the month, has written *Sunrise Trumpets* and *Cyclops' Eye*, and (with Frank Ernest Hill) *The Winged Horse: The Story of Poetry and the Poets.*

The Lion is fed this month by ***Pierce O'Keefe,*** of whom we can only say that he is a pedagogue himself and leave his identity otherwise shadowed in impenetrable mystery; and by ***Agnes Rogers Hyde*** and ***Frederick Lewis Allen,*** both of the staff of HARPER'S MAGAZINE.

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The frontispiece reproduces in full color a portrait study of Mlle. Balzac by ***Eugene Speicher,*** who is both an Academician and a member of the New Society of Artists, and has won many imposing awards since the day when he carried off the Thomas R. Proctor portrait prize at the Academy in 1911. His work is already represented in the leading American collections. Another study of Mlle. Balzac by him was recently purchased by the Cleveland Museum of Art.

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The Reverend Herbert Parrish tells us he finds that in "The Chimera of Church Unity," published last month, he understated the extent to which churches have come into the United Church in Canada. The Methodist body, he has since been informed, has "come in 100% and the Presbyterian about 85%, while the Congregationalists are a negligible factor, having very few churches in Canada. The movement has made considerable strides in recent months, the churches in the larger towns having joined very generally. There are some difficulties not entirely settled. It is significant that the Presbyterian polity, rather than the Methodist, has been adopted."

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The following letter from Andover, Connecticut, is one of many written in appreciation of Oswald Garrison Villard's article in the October issue.

DEAR SIR:

I would like to express to you my appreciation of the article in your current issue, "Official Lawlessness," by Mr. Villard.

One can imagine no more potent, exciting and direct cause of criminality, especially among the young, than the use of the "third degree." You have done a fearless public service in printing this article and I applaud you.

Very truly yours,

W. MCA. JOHNSON

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Several readers take issue with Albert Jay Nock for implying in his paper "On Making Low People Interesting" that our present civilization does not produce enough picturesque low characters in its literature or in its life. Says Nancy Barr Mavity, writing from Oakland, California:

What about the low people of the fo'c'stle who sailed with the Nigger on the *Narcissus*? Conrad always fails with his perfect ladies, but who shall label his riff-raff of the seven seas in a whole shelf-full of volumes dull? Or, if an author who is dead is not sufficiently modern to meet Mr. Nock's contention, what about "Sanger's circus" in *The Constant Nymph*, or, more recently still, Mr. Fortune in *Mr. Fortune's Maggot*? Even Frank Swinnerton, uneven as he is, contrives to give his shop girls a vivid life of their own, though they are frequently "low" in the social scale. And D. H. Lawrence? His novels may be—and are—life seen through a neurotic temperament, but vagueness and vapidity bear no part in their neuroses.

Annie Gow Peek, writing from Fontanelle, Iowa, after admitting that the casual visitor would find her native town a typically commonplace community, goes on to say:

I need no one to tell me that there is character in abundant variety in the rather limited area of my personal experience. I admit that my observation might have ended with that recognition but for one fortunate friendship with a woman who herself was the most remarkable character I ever expect to meet. To her, people were interesting, regardless of age, sex, education, moral condition or social standing, and they became vividly interesting when she talked about them. Much of her conversation was about people, for she liked them and they revealed themselves to her with a readiness that made me marvel. I knew the kindliness of her humor, the tenderness of her human sympathy, and the discretion that never betrayed a confidence. But I wondered how a stranger sensed these things beneath the quiet poise that was one of her distinctions.

Having known her and been privileged to see, in so far as one can, through another's eyes, I

know that the present abounds in character, rich in variety and interest, ready for anyone with a seeing eye and an understanding heart and a ready pen to give it to literature.

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In the leading editorial of a recent issue, *The Editor and Publisher*, outstanding journal of the fourth estate, calls George Seldes's article in our November issue "the clearest exposition of Fascist censorship that we have yet seen," and concludes:

We know what Mussolini wants of America, of course. He wants our gold. We ask the newspaper men of America if his means of creating a favorable impression here recommend him or his government to the confidence of this nation? We ask if it is not the old, old story—that governments which cannot bear the light of free journalism have rotten underpinning which investors and nations with money to loan might well beware of? Not until Italy can bear the truth, both favorable and unfavorable, shall we believe that her new system of government is what the blackshirts represent it to be.

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May we remind HARPER readers that Miss Jane Loring will be glad to do all or any of their Christmas shopping for them in New York, and will be especially glad to be given the opportunity to do it *early*? Her service, extended without charge to our subscribers, is explained in detail in the front advertising pages.

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In our October issue we quoted from a letter from Mr. Marc T. Greene in which, commenting upon Mrs. Hobart's letters from Nanking, he insisted that the Nationalist movement in China is neither dominated nor directed by so-called Red Russia. Mr. High's article in this issue deals in part with this question. Mrs. Florence Ayscough now writes us (also from personal experience) to take vigorous issue with Mr. Greene, and encloses a copy of a public statement given to the Associated Press in Shanghai on April 17 and signed by a group of seventeen Nanking missionaries of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal Churches and the Disciples of Christ, including President Bowen of the University of Nanking. From this statement we quote the following paragraph:

It now seems well established, in the opinion of both Chinese and foreigners, that those responsible for these outrages are of the Communist wing of the Nationalist Government which is dominated and directed by Russian Bolshevist advisers. They are the enemies not only of foreign interests in China but also of China's truest welfare, and it is our belief that unless checked they will make impossible the realization of an orderly and unified government. We have always been in sympathy with genuine Chinese national aims, and in spite of the fearful experiences through which they have passed, we maintain this sympathy. For this reason we are appalled as we think of the inevitable consequences to China and to the world, if the destructive influences which are now determining the policy of the Nationalist Government are not restrained.

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In his annual survey of the American short story, written for the Boston *Transcript*, Edward J. O'Brien places in his "three-asterisk list" twenty-three stories published in HARPER'S MAGAZINE during the year beginning with the September, 1926, issue and ending with the issue for last August. Three-asterisk stories, Mr. O'Brien explains, are those which possess the distinction "of uniting genuine substance and artistic form in a closely woven pattern with such sincerity that these stories may fairly claim a position in American literature." No other magazine published so many three-asterisk stories during this period, according to Mr. O'Brien's tabulations.

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Of this issue of the Magazine 154,000 copies have been printed, as against 146,000 last month.